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How Baduk Went International

The Korea Times will begin a new weekly column explaining the time-honored game to beginners, helping readers understand why so many people consider it so intellectually challenging and fun. Today's column will give a historical overview of the game. Then, in July, Nam Chi-hyung, Myongji University baduk professor and a master's degree holder of English, will begin her new column ``The ABCs of Baduk.'' – E.D.

By Kim Ki-tae
Staff Reporter

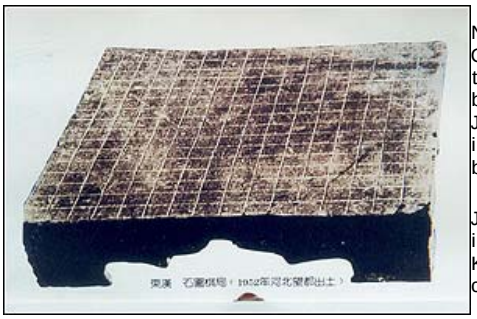
Baduk dates back to the 24th century B.C. According to an ancient Chinese encyclopedia called ``Pakmuji (博物誌),'' legendary Chinese King Yao invented the board game to enlighten his unintelligent son. In another record it was Yao's successor Shun, not Yao, who invented the game for his son.

In another speculation over the time-honored game, baduk was invented as a tool to observe the movement of heavenly bodies during the agricultural age in China. Its supporters claim that the board game and astrology have the same root as a primitive way of predicting and preventing floods.

Above photo: A detail of a painting by an anonymous Korean artist from the 19th century. Bottom left photo: The world's oldest baduk board found in China, dating back to A.D. 182. Below right photo: An 18th century print by Kitagawa Utamaro of a baduk game. Courtesy of cafe.naver.com/badol

In Korea, ``Samguk Yusa,'' the oldest remaining history book written in the 13th century, recorded that Paekche Kingdom's King Kaero played it with Buddhist monk Torim in the fifth century. Scholars believe that the ancient Korean kingdom probably taught the game to its neighbor Japan.

Since then, it has maintained its popularity as an intellectually stimulating and creative game, loved traditionally by the aristocratic class in northeast Asia. Now, Korea alone has around 8 million baduk players, and baduk lovers around the world are estimated to number over 30 million.



Northeast Asian nations, mainly South Korea, China and Japan, have started to standardize the international rules and have held global baduk competitions since the late 1970s. Japan's Fujitsu Cup is one of the landmark international contests, sparking exchanges between baduk masters in the nations.

Japan dominated the first stage of the international baduk era, but since the 1990s, Koreans have swept the majority of global competitions.

In the Western world, some pioneers came into contact with the Oriental game as early as the 16th century. According to an English Web site on baduk (senseis.xmp.net), German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz published an article about the game along with a picture, but he did not know the rules.

In the United States, Asian immigrants are thought to have introduced the game in the 19th century. The American Go Association was formed in 1937, and Manfred Wimmer was recorded as the first Western professional baduk player after qualifying in 1978.

Now more and more Westerners are coming to Northeast Asia to learn the ancient game's skill and philosophy. In Korea, Myongji University opened a baduk department in 1997 recruiting 20 freshmen, the only college-level baduk course in the world.

Foreign students from Hungary, Thailand and China are among those attending the classes.

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History Tells Baduk Passion

The 4,000 years of baduk has left ample anecdotes and lessons surrounding the most creative game invented by humans in the world. The following stories provide us with a quick glance at how Chinese have traditionally looked and enjoyed the board game. The next series is on the Korean ancient stories.

Chinese Empress Dowager Cixi, right, better known as Western Empress Dowager (1835-1908) of the Qing Dynasty, plays baduk with a eunuch. Source: National Palace Museum, Taiwan

Cao Recovers Depression

Cao Cao (155 - 220), China's ancient prime minister, became deeply impressed after his 800,000-strong army was badly defeated in a battle called Chibi.

Fleeing back to the kingdom's capital Hebei, Cao secluded himself from outer world, depressed, and refused to see anyone. One day, an old friend of the politician, Shan Zi Dao, visited him with a ``medicine for Cao's sickness.'' a baduk set.

Shan Zi Dao was renowned baduk player at that time and Cao allowed him in. On meeting, Shan told the premier that he came to say goodbye before he became a Buddhist monk. Surprised, Cao asked why the baduk player suddenly entered into a priesthood, Shan answered, ``I lost a baduk game and feel greatly down.'' Cao instantly comforted his friend by saying ``Losing in baduk is common. You had better not take it seriously.''

Then Shan relied ``Playing baduk is much like battle. Losing a battle can not be reason for not seeing visitors.'' Coming to the advice on the spot, Cao played a baduk game with Shan. After then, Cao tided over the depression and went back to his post with success.

Fei Wei Simulates War on Board

Fei Wei (?-253) was prime minister of Shu Kingdom during the Three ingdom's period in China.

In 244, a neighboring Wei kingdom invaded Fei's nation. Shu's emperor was deadly worried and sent his vassal Lai Ming to ask if the premier has any defensive plan. Meeting the king's messenger, Fei said, ``You come at the right time. Let's play a baduk game.'' While Lai thought Fei must make a joke, but the baduk game was set up.

While playing the board game, the premier said ``The development of the war is like this game. If we can occupy three key mountains, we can surround the invaders.''

Then the king's messenger found that his black stones surrounded by Fei's whites. He also discover the master showcased his strategy on the board. After the game, Fei picked up his arms and proceeded to surround the enemy and destroyed them.

Guan Yu Plays Baduk During Arm Operation

Guan Yu, a general of Shu Kingdom, is one of the most popular ancient heroes both in China and Korea. Once he was wounded by a poisonous arrow shot during a confrontation with an enemy force. The poison reached the bone and his right arm was badly swollen.

While his staffers insist on the army's retreat, Guan refused to back off. Instead, he let a famous physician operate on himself without any narcotherapy, as the vigilant general feared the enemy's attack during the operation. When the physician suggested Guan have his arms tied to a pillar lest he should move due to pain during the operation.

Guan laughed off the suggestion, saying ``This is such a simple procedure. No need to do that.'' Then the general began to play baduk game with his staff while the doctor cut open his arm with a surgical knife and scrape out the poison from the contaminated bone.

Throughout the bone-scratching operation, surrounding soldiers could not bear the bloody scene and sound of scratching bones. Meanwhile, Guan talked, drank and played the board game until the physician finally sewed up the wound.

Trading Hundred Years for Baduk

An ancient document ``Shu Yi Zhi,'' written by Ren Fong of the Nan Dynaty (420-589), recorded a legend of a woodcutter who spent hundred years watching baduk for hundred years.

According to the record, a woodcutter called Wang Zhi went up a mountain for work and found a few fairies gathering around a rock and playing a game. Curious, Wang got closer to them and was mesmerized by the board game. Finding the game extremely interesting, he totally forgot about woodcutting.

After a while, before the game was ended, one of the fairies lifted up his head and said to Wang, ``Why don't you go home? How long are you planning to stay here?''

Startled, Wang tried to pick up his axe to leave, and to his surprise found that the handle of his axe had rotten. When he returned to his village, he was surprised that there were no familiar faces and found out that a hundreds years had passed. This story is known as the story of the ''`Ranka Mountain,'' named after the name of the mountain.

First International Baduk Match

Guo Shiyan was the best baduk player in Tang Dynasty (618-907). One day, a Japanese prince traveled to the Chinese capital to pay tribute to China. As the price was also the best baduk player in Japan, there was a naturally match between the two masters.

In presumably the first international top-on-top game, the Chinese vassal could very well lose his life if he lost. Guo played the game cautiously, like walking on thin ice. He was sweating furiously and made every play after careful considerations.

When the prince played move number 42, Guo was in a terrible position, with two of his groups trapped by the prince's stones. Staring at the board, Guo discovered an exquisite play, which could break out of the traps.

The Japanese prince was stunned and soon resigned. The prince asked the translator how did Guo rank among Chinese Weiqi players. The translator boasted that Guo was only ranked number three.

The Japanese prince thus requested that he would like to meet the best player in China. The translator replied, ``One must beat the third best to meet the second best, and beat the second best before meeting the best.'' The prince sighed, ``The best in a small kingdom (Japan) is no match for the third best in a big kingdom (China). I truly believe now''

Source: www.yutopian.com

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Korean stories about baduk

By Kim Ki-tae
Staff Reporter

Korea has long cherished baduk, especially as part of the Taoist tradition. The following are stories of baduk-loving people throughout history.

A 19th-century porcelain case for writing brushes, with a drawing of three Taoist wizards playing baduk Courtesy of Ho-Am Art Museum

Spy Baduk Player

In the Three Kingdom era, Koguryo Kingdom's King Changsu (394-491) wanted the regions around Kyonggi Province where the Paekche Kingdom had a strong presence.

Racking his brain on how to chase out Paekche's forces from the region, King Changsu came to know that Paekche's King Kaero (?-475) was an avid baduk player. Then Changsu dispatched a Buddhist monk Torim, who was also a great baduk player, as a spy.

Pretending to be an asylum seeker, the monk approached Kaero and befriended him by playing the board game.

The priest then persuaded the game-obsessed king to launch giant construction and engineering works, which led to losses in the national coffer. Afterwards, Koguryo's forces single-handedly elbowed the Paekche people from the much-coveted region.

Not Giving Up Baduk

Yu Song-nyong (1542-1607), prime minister during the Choson Era, was also a renowned master baduk player. In 1580, Yu resigned from a key government post to care for his elderly mother. Then the monarch, who favored the royal vassal, ordered him to take on a governing role in Sangju, North Kyongsang Province, conveniently located only 40 kilometers away from his hometown.

One day while Yu was playing baduk in his residence, he was called on to settle a legal dispute as well as do some document work for the central government. Without stopping his game, Yu called two officials in and dictated the ruling and the document at the same time. Completing the two tasks without a single mistake, he also won the baduk game.

His versatile talents have become legendary. Though his successor tried to emulate Yu by doing the three tasks simultaneously, he failed. Instead, he found himself ruining the ruling, sending a wrong document to the central government, and losing the baduk game.

Taoist Wizard Baduk

Han Ho (1543-1605) was one of the best calligraphers in Korean history. While touring Mt. Kumgang, he got lost on the scenic mountain. Han managed to spot a thatched cottage with bamboo walls. Entering the remote house, Han found two elderly men playing baduk. One of the two men looked at Han and grinned, and said, ``We have long been waiting for you. As you see, we have completed building this cottage. Can you write a few characters on the signboard for the entrance?'' Han did as he was asked and received two writing brushes as his reward.

The elderly man said, ``You are the best calligrapher in this era, but not as good as Wan Hsi Chih. If you practice more, nobody can compete with you on this peninsula.'' Wan Hsi Chih (307-365) is a legendary calligrapher in China.

Han Ho later found out that the two baduk players were Taoist wizards, and with the two brushes he applied himself to constant practice. Later he became the best calligrapher in the nation.

Undisturbed Mind to Baduk

So Chon-nyong, a member of the royal family in the 16th century, was the best baduk player of his era. One day, a shabby-looking young man from the countryside visited him and asked him to play a game. So agreed, but to his surprise, he lost the game. So asked this mysterious man how he became such a formidable player, to which the man replied, ``My name is Shin Ku-ji and I learned the board game from a Taoist wizard on Mt. Chiri.''

He went on to say, ``To win baduk, you need to be less greedy. Your mind needs to remain undisturbed while attacking, defending, opening, closing, gathering, dissipating, holding and releasing stones.''

Listening to Shin, So became more enlightened to the exquisite principle on which Shin instructed, and So finally became a true baduk master.

Suspending Strike for Baduk

In a very recent anecdote, workers on strike suspended their demonstrations for a baduk match. The final match of the Fourth Tongyang Securities Cup was held in a hotel on Cheju Island in 1993, with the hotel's workers going on strike. However, they were silent for the duration of the game. Thanks to the workers' kindness, Lee Chang-ho defeated Cho Chi-hun.

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Comparing Baduk and Chess

In the world of games, where only a very few games successfully pass the test of time and are able to establish themselves beyond a single cultural region, Baduk is worthy of note for its perennial and widespread success.

For more than 2,500 years, Baduk has meant so much more than just a game to many people; it is regarded as an art, science and even a pedagogy in Korea, China and Japan, and has spread to the western world. Now, it offers not only entertainment and the thrill of competition, but it also provides a useful tool for studying human mental faculties and artificial intelligence.

Baduk is often compared with Chess, which is also a popular ancient game. Different from the games of luck, for example dice or lotteries, they both are games of strategy. Among such games, the movement of pieces is based solely on the player's reasoning. However, Baduk and Chess have developed independently of each other in different regions of the globe, so that there are remarkable dissimilarities between them.

Chess pieces imitate real life and are classified in many ranks, such as king, queen, bishop, knight, castle and pawn. They have their own nature and properties. When observing a Chess game, therefore, you can get an impression of watching a real battle of the European Middle Ages. Baduk pieces, by contrast, are pellets, or ``stones.'' They have an anonymous, collective or third person function. While a game is in progress, you see only the space composed of black and white stones, and empty intersections. If we say that these two games are simulations of life, we can call Chess a concrete imitation and Baduk is an abstract one.

The object of Chess is to capture or kill the opponent's king. Therefore, both players have to try their best to capture the opponent's pieces in order to weaken defense of the king. As the game goes on, the chess pieces on the board disappear one by one. However, in Baduk, it is unnecessary to kill as many pieces of the opponent as possible, because the purpose of Baduk is to obtain more territory than the opponent. So, in Baduk, the ultimate goal of securing the world as one's own is achieved through competition, rather than by the destruction of the opponent.

Chess is indeed a war, an institutionalized, regulated, coded war, with a front, a rear and battles. Baduk, however, is not merely a war; it is more analogous to economics and politics in that it concentrates on purchasing the maximum benefit available within the 361 intersections. If Chess gives an experience of a well-modeled war through the material reproduction of life, Baduk gives an understanding of a political struggle between two opposing powers through the abstract black and white dots and empty space.

Thus the spirit of Baduk is construction, not destruction. ``Baduk is harmony,'' said Wu Qingyuan, the great Baduk master. Baduk can be an art, as its competition is founded on this harmony, and the Tao of Baduk can be achieved through the insight of this harmony. The ultimate goal of this column is to communicate this Tao along with the skills and techniques of Baduk.

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Lesson 2 :The Fundamentals (part1)

In the first lesson, I briefly introduced the general ideas of baduk with a comparison to chess. Now we are going to learn the basics and rules of baduk.

The Board and the Stones

Baduk is a game played by two players with a wooden board and stones.

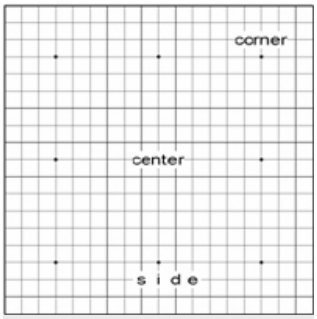

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 The full-size board has a grid of 19 horizontal and 19 vertical lines, with nine darker dots called ``star points.'' This name came from the Japanese term ``hoshi,'' or ``star,'' and it is called ``hwachom'' in Korean, meaning ``flower point,'' because there were flower figures on the traditional Korean baduk boards. These star points serve as marks in handicap games. In baduk, if the players differ in strength, the weaker player puts stones on these star points before the game starts in order to compensate for the difference.

At first glance, the board may appear to be square, but it is not. It is always slightly longer than it is wide, and players sit at the longer sides. On the board, there are four corners, four sides, and one center. The corners, sides, and center have characteristics and strategic functions that you will learn later.

Smaller boards, usually grids of 13 x 13 or 9 x 9 , are recommended in teaching beginners. It is easier for teachers to illustrate situations, and for beginners to finish an exercise game in less time.

Stones are black and white lens-shaped discs, made of plastic or glass in most sets, or slate (black) and clamshells (white) in high quality sets. Theoretically there should be 181 black stones and 180 white stones, because the total of 361 stones correspond to the number of intersections on the standard 19 x 19 board, but 150 of each ought to be enough.

The thickness of the board and stones may vary among sets, but usually the thicker the better. The average price of an ordinary baduk set is about 100,000-150,000 won.

Basic rules:

Whereas baduk itself is hugely complex, it has only a few simple rules, which can be learned in half an hour. Baduk can be learned in minutes, but it can take a lifetime to master the game.

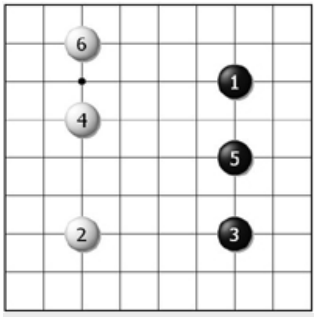

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 Almost all the basic baduk rules are included in this diagram: *The board should be empty before the game is started. The player who takes the black stones plays first. Each player alternately places a stone on an empty intersection, not in a rectangle, until the game is over.*

Normally, the player who is less skilled takes Black. If both of them are on the same level, *they choose which color by making a guess.* The process of choosing colors is as follows. The person who is older or stronger than the other takes a certain number of stones in one hand. The other player guesses whether it is ``odd'' or ``even'' and shows one or two stones correspondingly. If the answer is right, he will take Black. In this case, a set number of points, usually 5.5 or 6.5 points, is given to White for making up the loss resulting from Black going first.

Different from other board games, in baduk, *the stone cannot be moved once it is placed on the board, unless the stone is captured and removed from the board.* Stones taken off the board, called captured stones, are kept in the upturned lid of the bowl by the player taking them, and used in filling the opponent's territory at the end of the game. Capturing and filling territory will be dealt with in later lessons.

The Romanization for Korean terms used in this column has been changed to fit The Korea Times style and differs from that used in Nam Chi-young's book, ``Contemporary Go Terms.'' -ED.

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Lesson 3 The Fundamentals 2-Territory

In China, baduk is called ``weiqi,'' which literally means *the game of surrounding*: to surround territory, and to surround the opponent's stones to capture them. To surround and capture your opponent's stones is a good way to gain territory, but it is just the means to an end. The ultimate object of baduk is to gain more territory through surrounding.

What Is Territory?

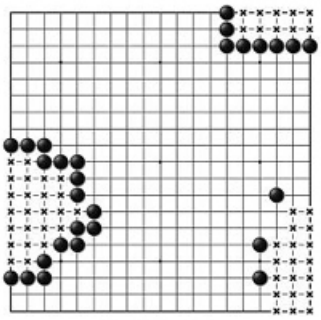

Diagram 1

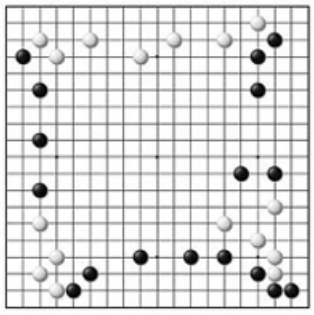

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 There are 10 x-marked points at the upper right corner and 24 at the left side. These points are surrounded completely by black stones with no opposing stones living inside. When empty points are thus perfectly surrounded by stones of one color, we call that ``territory.''

However, it is not efficient to fence an entire area stone by stone from the opening of a game. Because players take turns in baduk, it is enough to build a relatively stronger framework than your opponent's to make it ultimately your territory.

The position in the lower right corner shows how to make this territorial framework. The x-marked points in this corner are also considered ``territory'' or ``potential territory'' in practice. Diagram 2 gives an example of the opening of advanced players.

The Sum of Territory Decides the Result of a Game.

When stones are surrounding a territory, they can live on the board while the game proceeds, and so the territory is called ``chib,' ' literally meaning ``house,' ' in Korean. But the most important and ultimate function of territory is to decide the result of a game.

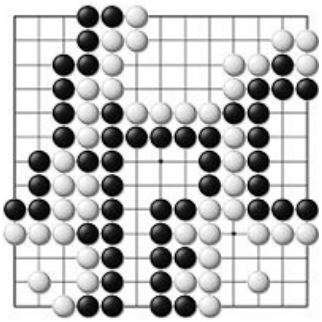

Diagram3

Diagram 3 This is the end of a game played on a 13x13 board. Black and White share the board with their respective territories. Let' s see how much territory they each have and who will win the game.

<u>The Total Territory of Black:</u>

16 (upper left corner) + 11 (middle of the board) + 8 (right side)

= 35 points of territory

<u>The Total Territory of White:</u>

20 (upper side) + 7 (lower left corner) + 12 (lower right corner)

= 39 points of territory

So, white wins by 4 points.

The Territory Should Not Be Breached

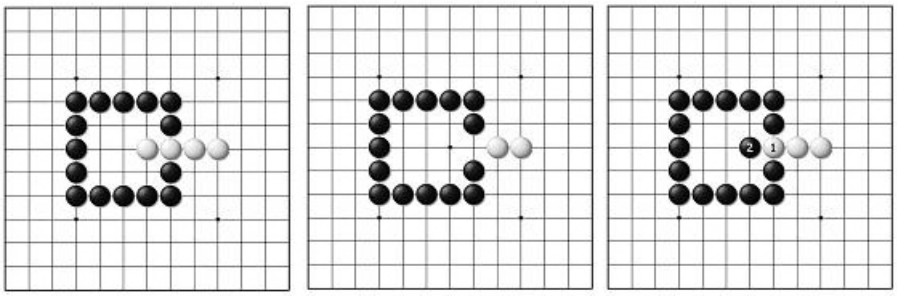

Diagram 4-1 Diagram 4-2 Diagram 4-3

Although you can make a potential territory while the game is in progress, it cannot be considered truly your own if the opponent's stones breach through it. The 15 Black stones in the diagram 3-1 surround some empty points, but they are not Black's territory since white stones have broken the fence.

What should Black have done not to lose the effort of placing these 15 stones? Let's go back to the situation just two moves before. In the diagram 4-2, Black surrounds a potential territory with a little gap that doesn't affect the integrity of the territory.

At this moment, Black doesn't need to add a move in the situation yet. However, if White thrusts in with 1, as in the diagram 4-3, Black must block with 2 to protect the territory.

Make Sure the Opponent Cannot Live Inside Your Territory

In general, to make a bigger territory is better. But, there is also a limit because your opponent can make his territory inside your own when yours becomes too big.

In Diagram 5, the territory of white is half of the whole board. However, when black comes in with 1, white cannot kill that stone, and the lower right corner is turned into black's territory.

This can also happen if Black plays 7 in the lower left corner. Therefore, we should not only defend territory from the opponent's assaults through the outer gap, but also make sure that the opponent cannot live within it.

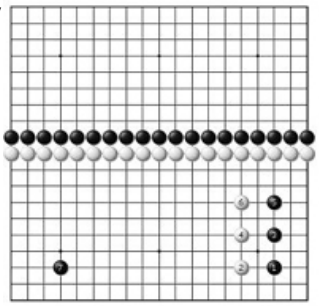

Diagram5

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Lesson 4: The Capturing

Once a stone has been put on the board it cannot be moved again. It may, however, be removed by being captured. This is the subject of this lesson.

What Is a Liberty?

Capturing is related to the most basic and important rule of baduk, which is that *no stone can stay on the board without a liberty*. A liberty means a vacant point directly adjacent to a stone or a group of stones. In Korean, it is called ``hwallo,' ' meaning a means of escape. To have liberties protects the stones from being captured.

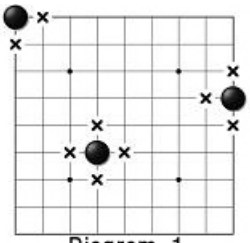

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 Usually one stone has four liberties as the x-marked points surrounding the stone to the lower left show. However, the number of liberties changes according to the location of a stone. There are three at the side edge of the board and only two at the corner edge.

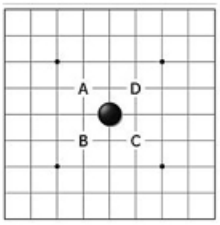

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 You should remember that the four diagonally adjacent points from A to D are not the liberties of the black stone.

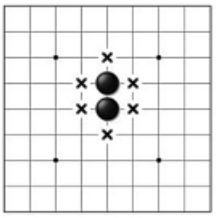

Diagram 3

Diagram 3 As the stones accumulate, the number of liberties increases correspondingly. The two connected stones have six liberties as shown. Practice counting the number of liberties of groups of stones you make on the board.

Capturing

As mentioned above, without liberty, stones cannot exist on the board and they are captured when all their liberties are filled by the opponent' s stones.

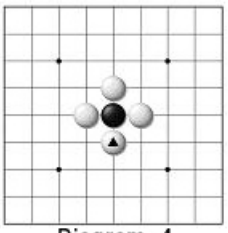

Diagram 4

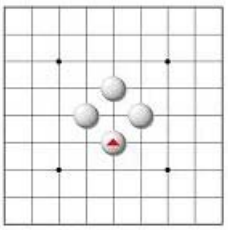

Diagram 5

Diagram 4 The black stone is captured when White plays D, and it is taken off the board. The result is shown in Diagram 5.

At the side edge or at the corner edge, a stone can be captured with fewer moves, as it has fewer liberties.

Atari

``Atari' ' is a Japanese term used for a positional state where a stone or a group of stones has only one liberty and may be captured on the next move if it is not given attention. It can be a verb to describe the act of placing a group under *atari*, as well as an adjective to describe the status of a group, as being ``*in* (the state of) *atari*.' ' The Korean term for atari is ``tansu,' ' literally meaning ``one liberty.' '

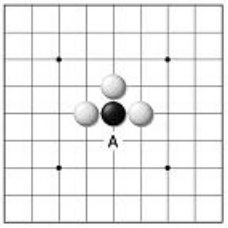

Diagram 6

Diagram 6 Three liberties of the black stone are filled and now it has only one liberty at `A,' so it is in atari. If White plays a move at `A' , the black stone will be captured. Therefore if it is Black' s turn, Black should escape by playing a move at `A' immediately.

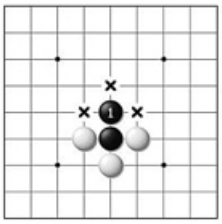

Diagram 7

Diagram 7 When a stone or a group of stones is in atari, you can save it by extending as Black 1 here. It increases the number of liberties from 1 to 3 as shown with the x-marked point.

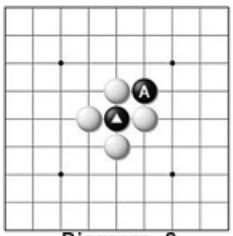

Diagram 8

Diagram 8 The extending move should be placed at the last liberty of the stone in atari. For instance, Black A gives no help to the ▲-marked black stone.

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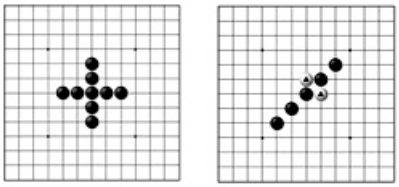
Lesson 5: Connecting and Cutting

The fundamental aspect of each and every battle in baduk is to connect and cut. In general, it is a good idea to connect your groups, and to cut your opponent's group into two or more.

Connecting

Diagram 1, 2 Strictly speaking, stones are connected only when they are located at adjacent points in a line. Therefore the stones in Dia. 1 are connected while the stones in Dia. 2 are not connected completely. If White can play two consecutive moves here, he can cut the black stones as the two D-marked white stones do below.

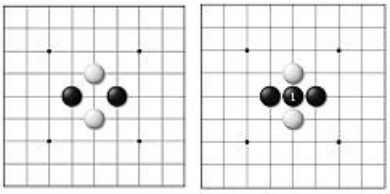


Dia. 1 Dia. 2

Cutting

Diagram 3 The two black stones are not connected. Neither are the two white stones.

Diagram 4 If it is Black's turn, Black 1 will not only connect two black stones, but also separate the two white stones at the same time. And vice versa, White can do the same thing by playing at 1 if it is his turn.

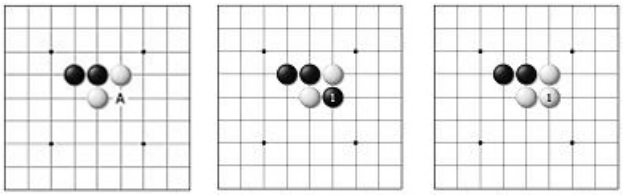


Dia. 3 Dia. 4

The diagrams above are just examples to show an ideal situation for cutting. In real games, however, most of the cuttings are made diagonally.

Diagram 5-7

As mentioned before, stones lined in diagonally adjacent points are not completely connected. Two white stones in **Dia. 5** are not connected yet, and there is a cutting point at 'A'. If Black plays there as in **Dia. 6**, the two white stones will be cut. On the contrary, if White plays there as in **Dia. 7**, those three white stones will be perfectly connected. Here, we observe that it is usual to cut where the opponent can connect.



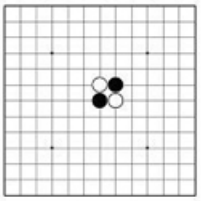
Dia. 5 Dia. 6 Dia. 7

*** Let's play a capturing game!**

In the last lesson, you learned how to capture a stone. In short, you can capture the opponent's stone by filling all of its liberties. You also know, therefore, when your stones are surrounded by the opponent's and there is only one liberty remaining, i.e. your stones are in atari, you should play a move at the last liberty point to save your stones.

It is quite simple when it is said theoretically, but it is not so easy in practice to notice when stones are in atari. Here is a simple and interesting game to help you to exercise atari and capturing by yourself.

It is called the ``capturing game.'' Apart from being a fun variation of baduk, it is often regarded as an easier ``starting game'' to get new players started without having to explain territory immediately. The winner is the first player who captures a stone or stones from his opponent.



Dia. 8

The game starts with the position shown in Dia. 8. All kinds of baduk boards, 9x9, 13x13, even 19x19, can be used. The rules are the same with baduk itself: both players taking turns, black playing the first move and so on. Players can vary the game by deciding how many stones you need to capture to win. I hope you enjoy the game and become familiar with lots of atari situations.

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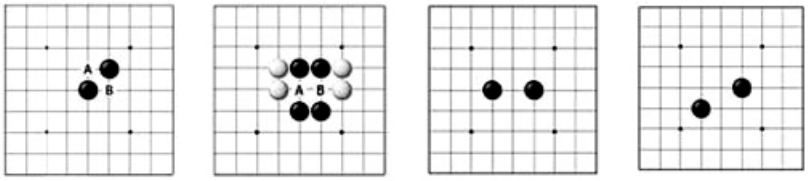
Lesson 6: Efficiency of Moves

The efficiency of moves is very important in Baduk. The more advanced you get the more important efficiency is in your games.

Efficiency In Connection

When we play Baduk, it is always desirable to play a move that serves many purposes. This concept is also applied in connecting. In order to shape a safer connection, the stones should be kept in close contact. However, if you play stones one to one, the speed is too slow, and you will lose the game due to a lack of efficiency.

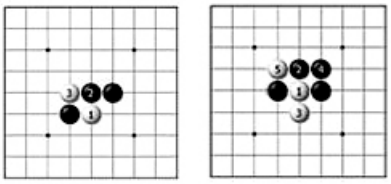
Diagram 1-4 Here are several examples of efficient connection: diagonal move (Dia. 1), bamboo joint (Dia. 2), jump (Dia.3) and knight's move (Dia.4). These four shapes are not completely connected yet, but it is difficult for the opponent to separate them because Baduk is a game of alternating turns.



Dia. 1 Dia. 2 Dia. 3 Dia. 4

It is obvious that diagonal moves and bamboo joints cannot be cut in one move, because they have two potential connecting points at A and B. If White wants to cut by taking one of them, for example A, Black will connect by taking the other, B.

Diagram 5, 6 The shapes of jumps or knight's moves can be cut as shown in these diagrams. However, it is not easy for White to cut because he also has to risk his own safety in cutting and suffer being cut himself. Moreover, in the resulting situations, White has fewer stones than Black, so that the coming fight is less favorable for him.



Dia. 5 Dia. 6

Efficiency In Capturing

Efficiency is also important in capturing. When a beginner captures his opponent's group, it is noticed that he often likes to waste many turns reducing the liberties of these groups to zero and then takes them from the board. Beginners say that in doing so, they feel that they really got hold of the opponent's group.

However, it is actually better not to bother wasting moves to remove the group from the board if you are confident that your opponent's group is dead. It is obviously better to play at another more important place and improve the efficiency of your moves.

The same thing is also said when your group of stones is dead. If a group is dead, then it is dead. Some beginners add more and more stones to make the dead group larger and larger, but it does not make any sense and the opponent will just say 'Thanks you!' Therefore if you recognize that a group of stones is dead, then forget about this group and play elsewhere, hoping to recover the loss of the group from there.

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Lesson 7: Life and Death (1)

Connecting is a good way to strengthen your stones, but it does not guarantee their absolute safety. In fact, there is a case in which a group of stones can never be captured _ even against an arbitrarily large number of consecutive moves by the opponent. We call this invulnerability ``life.'' This is today's topic.

Life and Death

In Lesson 4, we learned that ``no stone can stay on the board without a liberty.'' But even when a group of stones has some liberties, it can still be vulnerable.

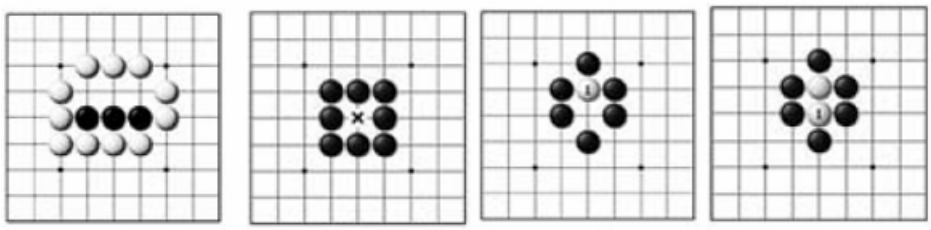

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3 Diagram 4

Diagram 1 The three black stones have three liberties, but they are dead, because Black cannot escape from White's siege. Is there a way to give ``life'' to the stones under a perfect blockade by the opponent? Of course there is.

Illegal Point

Ironically, we must learn about an illegal point before talking about the life of stones. In baduk, you can play on any vacant point you like, except a point that has no liberty.

Diagram 2 If White plays a stone at the x-marked point, it will automatically have no liberty, and so the 'x'-point is illegal for White.

Diagram 3, 4 In Dia. 3 White 1 is not an illegal move because it has one liberty. White 1 in Dia. 4 fills up the last liberty for White, so it is illegal.

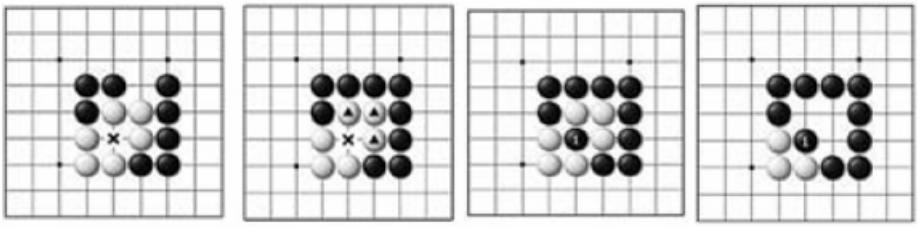

Diagram 5 Diagram 6 Diagram 7 Diagram 8

Diagram 5-8 The illegal point rule has an exception as all rules do. The x-marked point in Dia. 5 is surely an illegal point for Black, but what about the x-marked point in Dia. 6? If Black plays 1 as in Dia. 7, Black 1 will have no liberty, but the three white stones will have none either. Now, what will be the result of Black 1 in Dia. 7? In this case, baduk rules regulate that the player who causes stones of both side to have no liberties will have his opponent's stones removed. Hence, Black will capture the three white stones with the result shown in Dia. 8.

The Strength of a baduk Player

Baduk players can be classified into two types: amateurs and professionals. Amateur players usually play the game just for fun, while professional players play to earn a living through baduk tournaments. There are more than 10 major professional tournaments that have prize money comparable to chess and other sports. In addition, many minor tournaments are held in Korea every year.

There are three ways of indicating a baduk player's strength: the professional *dan* rating, the amateur *dan* rating and the amateur *kyu* (*kup* in Korean) rating. The professional dan starts at 1-dan and goes up to 9-dan. For amateur players, officially the highest dan is 7-dan. As you may guess, professional 1-dan is still stronger than amateur 7-dan.

The official kyu rating starts from 18-kyu and the strongest is 1-kyu, though you can meet 25-kyu and 30-kyu players at several on-line baduk game sites. Before the dan rating was introduced in Korea, 1-kyu meant the strongest players in the country.

This is why there are players still introducing themselves as `1-kyu' when they are as strong as amateur 7-dan players. So, you'd better be careful if you meet a `1-kyu' at a local baduk club.

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Lesson 8: Life and Death (2)

How can stones be exempted from being captured? The answer is that they have to have at least two eyes. In the last lesson, we studied the `illegal point.' The eye is closely related to the illegal point.

Eye

The eye is a central concept in baduk, because two eyes can guarantee the life of a group of stones.

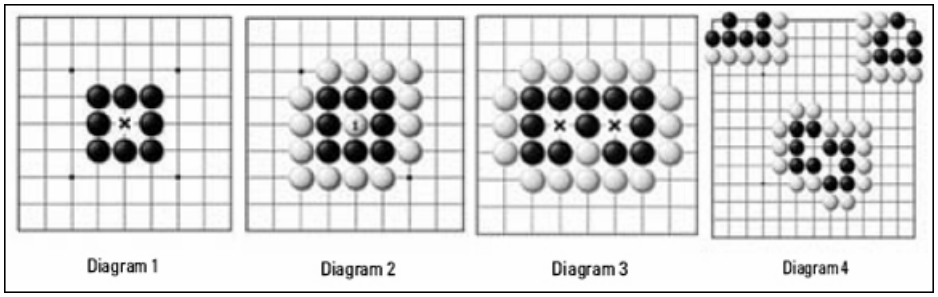

Diagram 1 In general, what baduk players call an eye is an empty space surroundedsingle point eye

Hence, the x-marked point shown here is an eye of the black stones surrounding it. However, as hinted above, having one eye is not enough to guarantee the life of stones.

Diagram 2 You may remember that the x-marked point in Dia. 1 is an illegal point, and that

White cannot play on it right now.

However, when the black stones are completely surrounded by White as shown, they can be captured by White 1, because the player who causes the stones of both sides to have no liberties will have his opponent's stones removed.

Diagram 3 The situation

changes when a group has two illegal points. Even if black stones are completely surrounded, White cannot capture them, because putting a white stone in any of the two x-marked points is illegal.

These two x-marked points are the two eyes that guarantee the life of the black stones.

Diagram 4 Here are several examples of Black groups living with two eyes.

An eye can be defined as an empty space or intersection where the opponent can neither play on nor force it to be filled. The second condition of an eye is also very important.

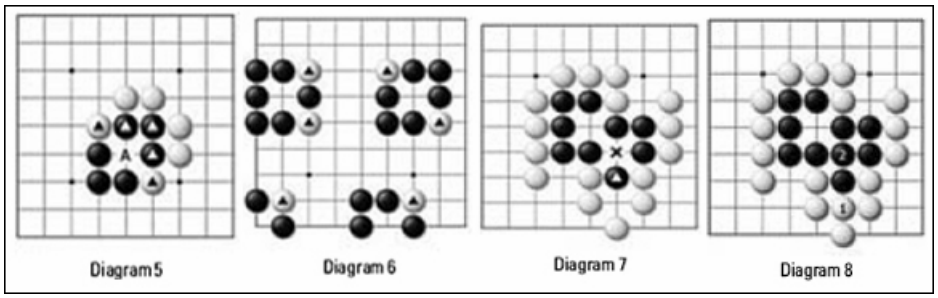

Diagram 5 'A' is not Black's eye because two white stones marked with '▲' make the three black stones in atari and force Black to connect at 'A'. In this case, the point 'A' is not a real eye but a false eye. You should be very careful because in general, false eyes look like real eyes.

Diagram 6 Here are some examples of Black's false eyes. The points where ▲-marked white stones are located are the vital points that make the eyes false.

Diagram 7, 8 Of the two eye-like empty points, the x-marked one is a false eye, so the black group is dead. If White plays at 1 in Dia. 8, the black stone '▲' will be in atari. Regardless of whether Black connects at 2, the group has only one eye, so it is eventually dead.

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Lesson 9: Life and Death (3)

As mentioned in the last lesson, what is called an ``eye'' is usually a single point eye. However, there are many shapes bigger than that while still having just one eye. Since in baduk it is very important for a group of stones to have two eyes, it is necessary to know whether a group has enough eyes or not.

Basic Shapes of Death

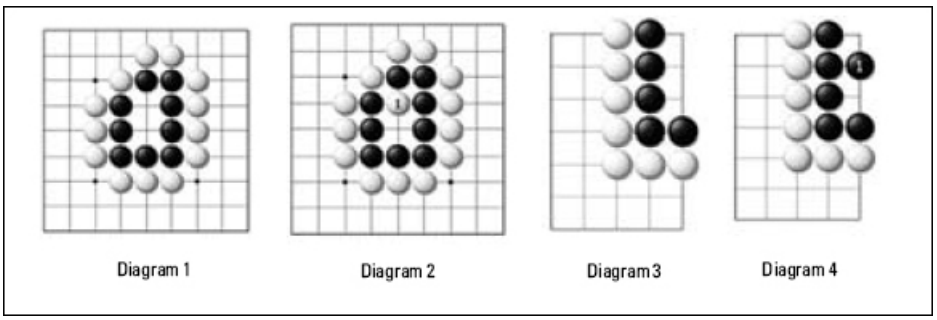

Diagram 1, 2 The Black group has two empty intersections surrounded only by his stones, but it is not alive because the two points are not two ``eyes.'' White 1 in Dia 2 is not an illegal move, and the entire Black group is dead whether Black captures it or not.

Actually, the Black group in Dia. 1 was already dead even before playing White 1 of Dia. 2, because it doesn't have any

means to make two (separate) eyes in it.

Therefore, White doesn't need to spend another turn trying to kill this group by playing 1.

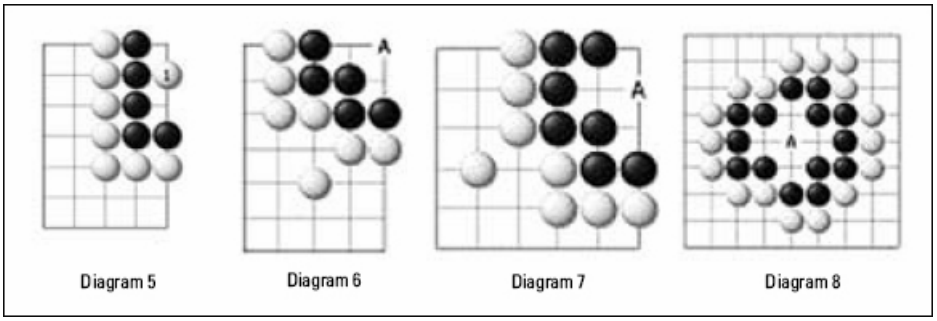

Diagram 3-5: Straight Three

The Black group here has a bigger eye space than the group in Dia.1, but it is still not sufficiently safe. If Black wants to be sure of his safety, he has to add a move at 1 and make two separate eyes as shown in Dia. 4.

If it is White's turn, however, White also can play at 1 in Dia. 5, which is definitely a vital point of the shape that will kill the Black group. Now, there is no hope for Black to save this group. Any of Black's moves played after White 1 will just fill its own liberties.

Vital Point: It is defined as a point that is fatal to a group or a shape of stones. Here, it can be defined as a point where both players want to play to save or kill a group of stones.

As shown in Dia. 4 and 5, a vital point is a double-edged sword that is capable of saving a group as well as killing it. There is a baduk proverb which says the vital point of the opponent is yours as well. The question is, who plays first.

Diagram 6-9 Bent Three, Flower Four, Flower Five and Flower Six

The shapes of black stones in Dia. 6 to Dia. 9 are respectively called bent three, flower four, flower five and flower six. In each of the diagrams, 'A' is the vital point, which determines the life or death of each group. The vital points of these shapes can be easily found since they are usually on the symmetrical points of the shape.

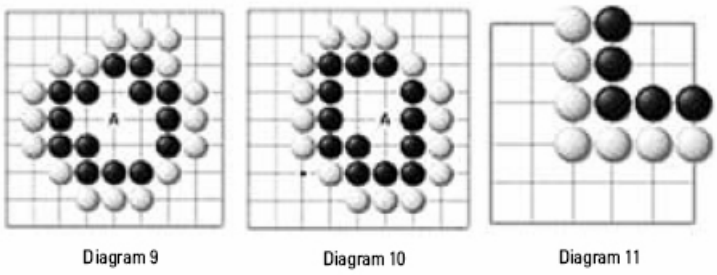

Diagram 9 Diagram 10 Diagram 11

Diagram 10: Rabitty Five

It is a little difficult to find the vital point of this shape. But if you consider that the purpose of White is to prevent Black from making two eyes, you can find it. In short, the point where Black can form an eye, `A' in this diagram, is the vital point.

Diagram 11: Square Four

In a *square four*, it is impossible to find a vital point. Actually the situation is even worse than in other shapes where the vital points are easily found, because here Black also cannot find a vital point in order to live. Any black stones added to *square four* make it a *bent three* and then White will kill it by taking the vital point of the new shape. Therefore, even if it is Black's turn, it is impossible for him to save the group.

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Lesson 10: Life and Death (4)

It is important to sense danger to your group and find a way to protect it, but it is important as well not to spend time trying to save a group that is already safe.

Basic Shapes of Life

There are several types of eye space that does not need the help of extra moves to live.

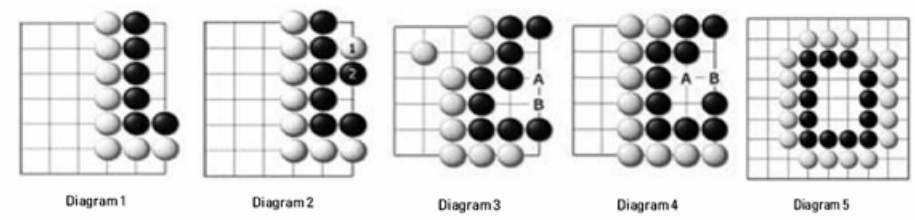

Diagram 1-2: Straight four

The black group is alive because there is no vital point that prohibits Black from making two separate eyes. Even though White plays at 1, Black can make two eyes by at 2 as shown in Dia. 2.

Diagram 3-4: Bent four

The black shapes in Dia.3 and Dia.4, called *bent four*, are unconditionally alive because they have two points that produce two separate eyes at A and B.

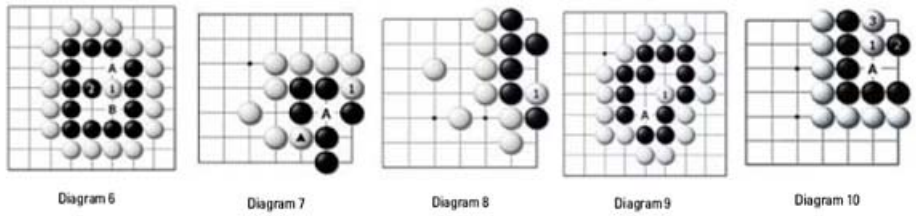

Diagram 5-6: Rectangular six

In the shape of *rectangular six*, there are two symmetrical points. If White takes one of them with 1, Black will live by taking the other with 2 as shown in Dia. 6. As you see, it is impossible for White to play both A and B

and prevent Black from making two eyes.

How to Kill a Group by Changing an Eye to a False Eye

A group of stones needs at least two eyes for life. If one of the eyes is a false eye, or gets destroyed, the group will die.

Diagram 7 Black's eye shape at 'A' will be turned to be false if White plays at 1. White can give atari to the three black stones with the help of D-marked stone.

Diagram 8 White 1 is a useful technique to destroy an eye on the edge of the board. The eye shape made from Black's capturing White 1 will be false and the whole black group will die. This kind tactic of sacrificing a friendly stone to destroy the opponent's eye shape is called *throw-in*.

The Weakness of the Shapes of Life

In general, the shapes of *bent four* and *rectangular six* are alive, but in a certain condition, they can also be killed.

Diagram 9 Even though the Black's shape here is *bent four*, it is not safe enough because of the weakness at 1. White 1 gives an atari to the three black stones, and after Black connects at A, the whole group turns to be *bent three*.

Diagram 10 When a shape of *rectangular six* places in a corner of the board, the situation is changed. First, White takes the symmetrical point with 1 and Black takes the other symmetrical point with 2. Then, White will play at 3 in order to block one of the eyes making points, which is useless in a normal situation because Black can make eye by playing at A-corresponding point. However, in a *rectangular six in a corner*, it is impossible for Black to play at 'A', because then the whole Black will be in atari, and captured.

If Black plays at 3, instead of Black 2, the eye space will be changed into *rabitty five* and White will kill it by taking the vital point of a *rabitty five*.

Nam Chi-hyung is a baduk professor of Myongji University and a professional player of the game.

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Lesson 11: Life and Death (5)

In the last four lessons, we learned about the life and death of a group. So far, the only condition we learned in which a group can live is to have two separate eyes. In this lesson, you will see that there are other ways, though not so usual, in which stones can live.

Stones can live, i.e. be assured of permanent stay on the board, in the following cases:

1. when they have two separate eyes or a high possibility of making them,

2. when they have enough territory to survive an invasion, or

3. when they are in *dual life.*

Now, let's look at conditions No.2 and No.3.

Enough Territory to Survive an Invasion

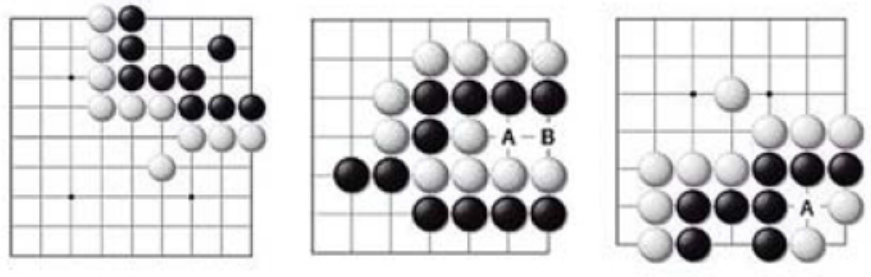

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3

Diagram 1 Does the black group that surrounds 9 points in the corner still need to make two separate eyes to ensure its life? As you may guess, the answer is 'no'. It has enough territory to defend any possible invasion of White, and Black can make eyes inside the territory whenever it is necessary.

Usually, the more points a group has, the safer the group is. However, as mentioned in the last lesson, even if a group secures a large enough territory, it cannot be invulnerable to weaknesses inside. Therefore, you should pay attention to your groups' safety at all times.

By the way, what is *dual life*? In general, stones can live on the board when they have two separate eyes or at least a high possibility of making them. But, there is a special case in which stones can live without two eyes, and this case is called *dual life*.

Dual Life *Dual life* can be defined as a situation in which two combined opposing groups without two eyes can't capture each other because the liberties shared by them cannot be filled by the opponent. In such a case, both groups are considered to be alive. This is called *bik* in Korean and *seki* in Japanese. There are numerous types of *dual life* that can arise. For example, a capturing race may end in a *dual life* situation when neither player can fill the internal liberties.

Diagram 2 This is the most common case of *dual life.* The five black stones and the five white stones are surrounded and cut by each other, and neither of them have eyes. Black can't lessen the number of White's liberties by playing at either 'A' or 'B.' If he does, the black stones will be captured by White on the following move. The same thing goes for White, i.e. White also cannot play at 'A' or 'B'. Therefore, they cannot kill each other, and so, they are both alive.

Diagram 3 This is another example of *dual life*. Here, both Black and White have one eye respectively. Although one eye does not guarantee independent life, they both can live, because neither player can play at 'A'.

When *dual life* happens in a game, areas such as 'A' and 'B' in Dia. 2 and the eyes

in Dia. 3 are left untouched till the game is over. When the players tally the score, all groups involved in *dual life* are deemed alive, but no territory or untouched intersections are counted.

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Lesson 12: The Ko Rule

In this lesson, we will learn new things; ko and the ko rule. The rule that regulates ko is one of the most basic rules of Baduk. Without this rule, a game may go on without end.

What Is Ko?

Ko is the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese character ``劫'' which means eternity. It is called ``pae'' in Korean. From the name, you may guess its characteristics.

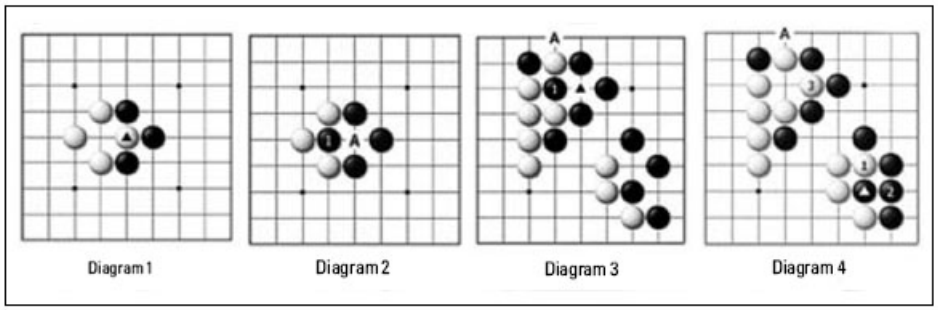

Diagram 1-2 The ▲-marked white stone is in atari now. Therefore, Black can capture it with 1 as shown in Dia. 2. However, immediately after Black 1 captures it, it in turn is also placed in atari. Then, can White recapture Black 1 right away? If White takes it again, the resulting situation will be the same in Dia.1. In this way Black and White can repeat capture and recapture endlessly, if the repetition is not regulated by a rule. Hence, the situation shown in Dia.1 and 2 is called ko, and there is a special rule for it.

The Ko Rule

The ko rule removes the possibility of indefinite repetition by forbidding the immediate recapture of the ko. For example, in the diagrams above, White's play at ``A'' right after Black's capturing with 1 in Dia. 2 is prohibited, and White has to play at least one move elsewhere. Black may then end the ko by playing at ``A,'' or he can choose to answer White's intervening move. If Black answers, White is then permitted to recapture the ko. Well, let's look at how this rule is actualized in a game.

The Ko Threat

Diagram 3-4 Suppose that Black 1 captures the white stone at ▲ as shown in Dia. 3. If White ignores the ko, Black will capture another white stone by playing at ``A.'' So, White should fight for winning the ko to save his stone. However, White can't recapture Black 1 by playing at ▲ immediately, but has to play elsewhere first, like White 1 shown in Dia. 4.

Since **White 1 puts the ▲-marked black stone in atari, Black has to choose between ending the ko by playing at ``A,'' and saving the ▲-marked stone by connecting at 2. If Black connects at 2 as shown in Dia. 4, then White can recapture with 3. The White 1 in Dia. 4, which threatens the opponent to answer, is called a ko threat.**

As you have seen, a ko threat is some kind of a forcing move, asking for compensation elsewhere for losing the ko. If the opponent does not like this deal, i.e. answers the ko threat, then you can recapture the ko. For this reason, usually the number of ko threats each player has to decide the outcome of the ko; the one with more ko threats wins the ko.

Although you have many moves that force the opponent's answer, if the forcing power of the moves is not as great as the value of the ko itself, they cannot be ko threats. Therefore, when you start a ko fight, you should be very careful to be sure of not only the number of forcing moves (ko threats) you have, but also their value.

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Lesson 13: The Value of Ko

Different ko have different values and it is important to be able to tell how significant a ko is. Some ko affect the life or death of a group while some are nothing more than a few points. Once you know the value of a ko, it is not very difficult to know whether a ko is a threat or not.

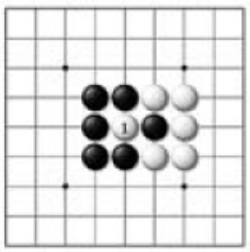

Diagram 1 Half-Point Ko

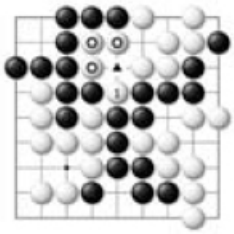

Diagram 2 Almighty Ko

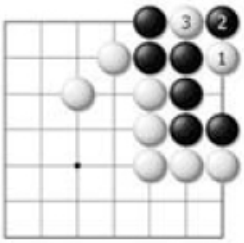

Diagram 3 A Ko in a Group

Diagram 1 Half-Point Ko

White needs two moves to win the ko, one for capturing a black stone and another one for ending the ko, but winning the ko is only worth one point. As a result, the value of each move is half a point and that's why this shape is called a ``half-point ko.'' This ko has no influence on other stones, so it is usually fought for at the end of the game.

Diagram 2 Almighty Ko

A ko is called an ``almighty ko'' when its outcome can decide the result of the game. The ko starting with White 1 is one. If White wins the ko, two groups of Black will be severed, and consequently die. On the other hand, if Black wins the ko, not only will the two black groups be connected and saved, but also the white group on the upper side will die. This is because the black stone placed at '▲' puts the three '¡'-marked white stones in atari, and therefore the eye on the second line from the top becomes false. Therefore, whoever wins the ko will win the game and its value is enormous! When a ko like this happens, no ko threats usually work, because the player who takes the ko first, in this case White, does not answer to any ko threat.

Diagram 3 A Ko in a Group

We have learned about the life and death of groups, but sometimes the life of a group cannot be judged definitely. This is so when there is a ko inside a group of stones.

White 1 wants to kill the black group in the corner. Now, for Black, to make a ko with 2 is the only way to have a chance of saving the group. If black wins this ko, the black group will be alive; otherwise it will be dead, and who will win this ko is up to the number of ko threats.

The actual value of the ko, therefore, is the sum of the points both Black and White will get when they win the ko. However, the load of this ko felt by Black and White is quite different. As you may guess, it is much easier for White to deal with this ko because he loses relatively little even if he loses the ko. Therefore, White can play relatively smaller ko threats than Black, and the number of ko threats White has can be large. That's why this kind of ko ends with White getting some profit from a ko threat smaller than the actual value of the ko, and Black saves his group. As a matter of fact, it is much better for Black to have the opportunity to make ko threats than to be killed unconditionally.

Among Baduk concepts, ko is one of the most difficult to master. There is a proverb saying that ``beginners are afraid of a ko fight.'' But don't worry. If you know the exact value of a ko, you already know how to play it.

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Lesson 14: The End of the Game

The End of the Game

Theoretically and practically, if one player thinks the territory gap is too big to recover from, he can resign and end the game at any time. The opponent is said to *win without counting* (this is a literal translation of ``불계승(不計勝)''). If both players want to end a game by counting territory, first the game should be finished completely.

This is how you can finish a game, and how to tell when a game is over.

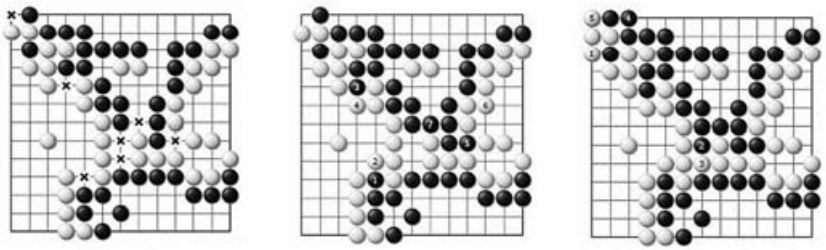

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3

Diagram 1 This is a game played on a 13-by-13 board. You can see the game is nearly over, since the territory outline is almost shaped. But there are still some empty intersections left, which should be filled by both players, marked by an ``x.'' Some of them have territorial value, while the others have no effect on the ebb and flow of territory.

Diagram 2 From Black 1 to 7, these seven moves have territorial meaning. Black 1 and 3 erase one point from White's territory each, and Black 5 is a forcing move (*sonsu* in Korean) to make White fill his own territory with 6. If White doesn't answer at 6, Black will cut at that point so that the two white stones placed in atari by Black's cutting, or the five stones in the upper right will be captured. After White connects at 6, Black 7 takes the last valuable point and then the game is theoretically over.

Filling in the Neutral Point Even when all the territorially meaningful moves have been played, the game is not actually over if there are empty intersections belong to neither players' territory. These points are called *neutral points* (``*kongbae*'' in Korean) and both players should fill them in one by one. The x-marked points left after 1 to 7 are played in Dia. 2 are such examples. Filling in the neutral points makes the counting (scoring) process easier.

Diagram 3 Black and White fill the neutral points. Strictly speaking, White 1 and Black 4 are not filling neutral points, but filling territory. Filling neutral points is for the purpose of making the counting more expedient, and White 1 and Black 4 make this process easier. Both are to be played if a stone is placed at 5.

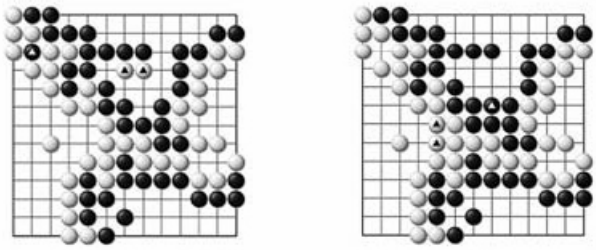

Diagram 4 Diagram 5

Disposition of Dead Stones

Diagram 4 The two '▲'-marked white stones that are left on the board are dead, since they are cut off from the friendly stones, and they don't have two eyes. When the counting process begins, these kinds of dead stones on the board and the ones captured during the game are placed in the territory of the same color.

Territory Counting

Diagram 5 When the dead stones are placed in the territory of the same color, we can count each side's territory. In an actual game, the territories are rearranged so that they are easier to count, but I'll leave that to you. Anyway, in this game, Black has 42 points and White has 41 points, so Black wins by 1 point.

So far, we have learned almost all of the basic rules of baduk. Now you're ready to play and review what we have learned. In the next lesson, we will learn the basic techniques of baduk, which are very useful when you play real games.

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Lesson 15: Connecting and Cutting

Connecting and Cutting Techniques In the fifth and sixth lessons, we learned about the basic concept of connecting and cutting. In general, stones become stronger when they are connected and weaker when they are cut. However, it is not very easy to learn how to connect and cut stones.

Connecting Techniques The most fundamental form of connecting is the ``solid connection.'' A solid connection is made, for example, at the cutting point ``A'' in Dia. 1. Since a solid connection

removes the cutting point itself, there is no possibility for the opponent to cut right at that point. Therefore, connecting solidly is the safest way to connect stones.

Although you gain a certain amount of safety, you also give up some efficiency in exchange. The connecting techniques introduced below are relatively more efficient, though not as safe, as connecting solidly.

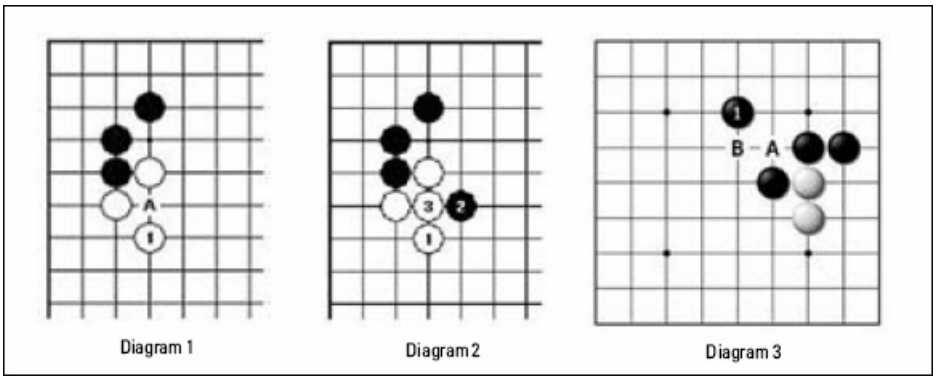

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3

Diagram 1-2 Tiger's Connection

White 1 defends the cutting point at ``A'' because Black cannot come in. If Black plays at ``A,'' the black stone will be captured since the white stones are in the shape of the *tiger's mouth*. This is why this connection is called the ``tiger's connection.'' Usually, the tiger's connection is more efficient than connecting solidly. Sometimes we take it one step further, sometimes to make eyes more easily and sometime just to make a nice shape. However, this shape may leave weaknesses and it allows the opponent to use the peeping move to his advantage, as shown in Dia. 2.

Diagram 3 Knight's Connection

Black 1 shows an advanced connection skill. It does not only prevent White from cutting, but also serves as a good extension move for the territory in the corner. If White tries to cut at ``A,'' Black will capture it by playing at ``B.''

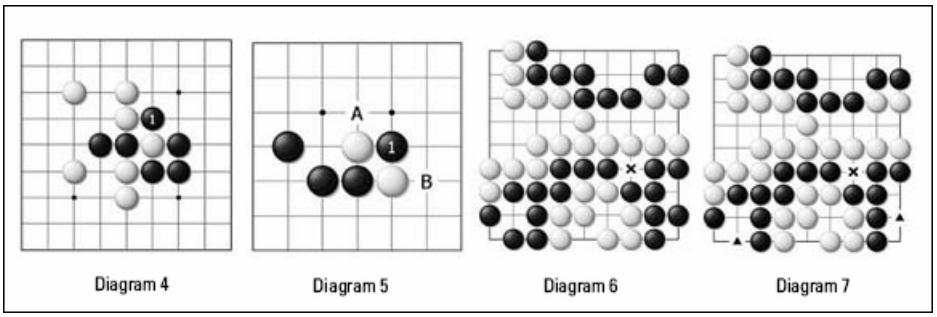

Diagram 4 Diagram 5 Diagram 6 Diagram 7

Diagram 4 Capturing the Cutting Stones

The capturing move of Black 1 is also a good method of connection. It kills the ``key stone,'' which cuts the two groups of Black, to clear away any obstacles to connecting.

Meaningful and Meaningless Cutting

Diagram 5

If you cut the opponent's stones, that means you want to attack those stones. Here, Black 1 cuts White into two single stones, and White cannot rescue both of them at the same time. If White goes up at ``A,'' Black will capture the other one by making atari with ``B,'' and if White escapes to ``B,'' Black will play at ``A'' and capture that stone instead. Like this, before you cut, you should see if there are stones you can attack.

Diagram 6-7

If White plays at the x-marked points, then he can cut the Black stones into two groups on the lower part of the board. However, the meaning of White's cutting is different in these two situations. In Dia. 6, both black groups already have two eyes, so they don't need to be connected. On the other hand, the cutting is meaningful in Dia. 7, for both groups are not yet completely alive. If White cuts there, one of the two black groups will die.

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Lesson 16: Capturing Techniques (1)

Although capturing is not the ultimate goal of Baduk, it is exciting and it works to your advantage in building up territory or in connecting the cut groups. However, capturing is not easy. Just when you think you've grabbed the opponent's stones, they pass through your fingers. Therefore, to capture the opponent's stones, it is necessary to know the basic tactics of capturing.

Driving Towards the Edge

We have learned that the stone has less liberty on the first line of the board. There is also less room for the stones driven toward the edge to increase the number of liberties. The first line is sometimes even called the ``dead line.'' Hence, it is a good method to drive stones toward the edge when killing them.

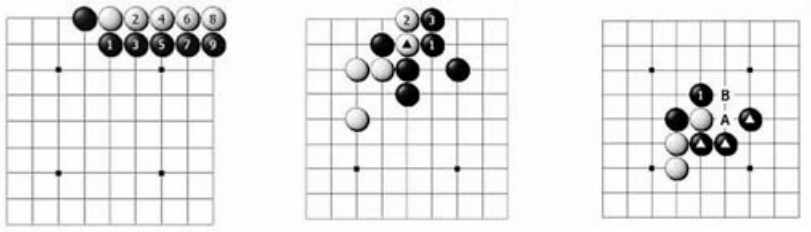

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3

Diagram 1 Black 1 places the white stone in atari on the first line, and White tries to escape from 2 to 8. But it is impossible for White to prevent Black from making ataris, and white stones have to be captured eventually as shown here.

Diagram 2 The same capturing tactic can also be used when you capture a stone on the second line. Black 1 places the ``▲'' -marked white stone in atari and leaves only one way for it to escape, which goes towards the first line. Even if White goes down with 2 and tries to make more liberties, Black can simply make another atari with 3, and the two white stones die.

On the contrary, if your stones are in atari on the first or second line, be careful not to escape without reading, unless you are sure of their safety. Otherwise, you may cause more loss by the escaping move.

Using the Surrounding Circumstances

Diagram 3 There are two ways for Black to place the white stone in the center in atari, and Black 1 is the correct atari to capture it. White cannot go out with ``A,'' since there are three ▲-marked black stones waiting for White to play ``A,'' in order to capture with ``B.'' If Black chooses the atari with ``A,'' White will play at 1 and happily run away.

Double Atari

As you may have guessed from the name, ``Double atari'' means placing two opponent groups in atari with a single move. Since the opponent cannot save both groups, usually you can capture at least one of them by playing ``Double atari.''

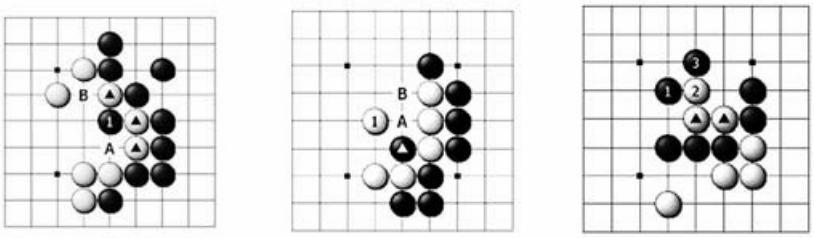

Diagram 4 Diagram 5 Diagram 6

Diagram 4 Black 1 places both the two ▲-marked white stones and the single one in atari at the same time. White can save only one of them. If White connects at ``A,'' then Black will capture the other with ``B.''

Net

Net is a special way of capturing. It doesn't fill the opponent's liberty directly, but blocks the way out of it.

Diagram 5 White 1 is the simplest form of net. The ▲-marked black stone still has two liberties and so two ways of escaping. But, if it tries to go out through one of them, for example with ``A,'' White ``B'' will block it.

Diagram 6 Making a net for two stones looks a little more difficult. However, if you know the principle of making a net, it is as easy as to do with a single stone. Black's net with 1 also doesn't lessen the liberties of the two ▲-marked white stones, but still White cannot break out of it. The exchange of White 2 and Black 3 only reduces White's liberties.

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Lesson 17: Capturing Techniques (2)

The ladder is a very interesting capturing technique, but it is a little more difficult than the techniques that we learned before. This entire lesson is devoted to introducing it.

Ladder: A sequence in which one keeps forcing the opponent's stones into atari until they are driven to the edge of the board or to friendly stones and are captured.

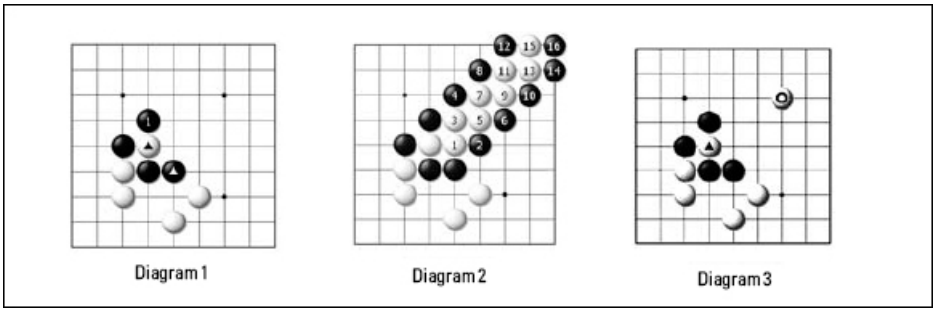

Diagram 1 This is a typical starting shape of a ladder. Compared with techniques introduced before, there are not as many stones set for capturing the white stone. Black 1 is the correct direction of atari. This Black 1 and the '▲'-marked black stone are helping each other to make a ladder. But, will the white stone be captured?

Diagram 2 If White 1 tries to escape, Black 2 ataris ahead of it. If White still goes out with 3, Black 4 again ataris. (The direction of atari is very important.) In this way, the White forced in continuous ataris and the Black chasing it make a step-like shape, and this is why the capturing technique is called the ladder. The Korean name for this is ``chuk.''

The sequence of the ladder ends in the corner and all the white stones are captured. Therefore, running out of a ladder is a stupid thing, except when a ladder breaker is located in the path of the ladder.

Ladder Breaker: A stone that is located in the path of a ladder making it invalid.

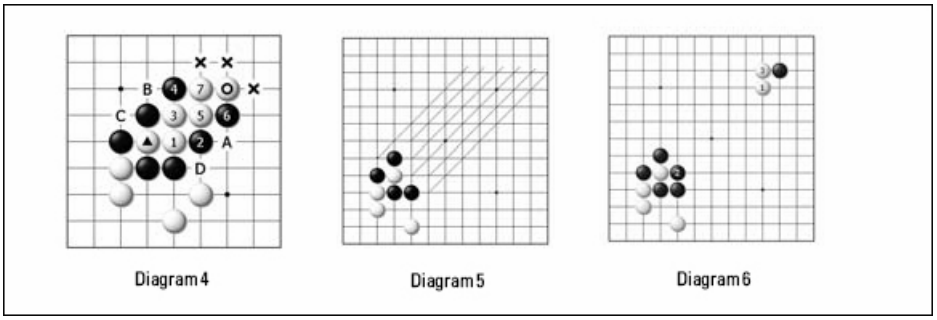

Diagram 3 What if there is an ¡-marked white stone added in the ladder shown above?

Diagram 4 White runs out, and if Black still ataris in the same way as before, eventually White 7 connects with the '¡'-marked stone. Now Black cannot make atari any longer, and the ladder is broken. This is why we call the '¡'-marked white stone the ``ladder breaker.''

When a ladder is broken, the chaser, Black here, suffers many cutting points and most of them may cause double ataris. Therefore, you should make sure the ladder will be O.K. before you play it. Otherwise you may not only lose a ladder, but even the game. Now it's time to learn how to read a ladder.

How to Read a Ladder

A ladder itself is not so difficult to learn, but it is hard to read in a game. It may go through the whole board, but you should only read it rather than play it out in practice. Theoretically, if the opponent's stone is on one of the six lines shown in Dia.5,

the ladder will be broken. You may verify this point yourself.

How to Make a Ladder Breaker

If your stone or stones are caught in a ladder and there is no friendly stone in its path, you can play a ladder breaker that is used in your interest.

Diagram 6 Here, White cannot save the stone in the ladder. Instead, it plays a ladder breaker at 1. Black should choose between answering at the upper-right corner and capturing the white stone to avoid the ladder from being broken. It is similar to the decision making in a ko and the ko threat. Where to play depends on which is more valuable. In this example, if the white stone in

the ladder is saved, the black stones around it will get into trouble, and so Black should capture it. All the while, White can play two stones consecutively in the upper-right corner, and get the advantage of the position.

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Lesson 18: Capturing Techniques (3)

Throw-in is a capturing tactic of sacrificing a friendly stone to reduce the eye shapes or liberties of the opponent's stones. It is often used in combination with other capturing skills such as snapback and atari, Japanese for the position in which an opponent's stones are in jeopardy, similar to ``check'' in chess.

Throw-in and Snapback

A snapback is a shape in which capturing an enemy stone puts the capturing stones in atari. The Korean term for this shape is ``hwangyok.''

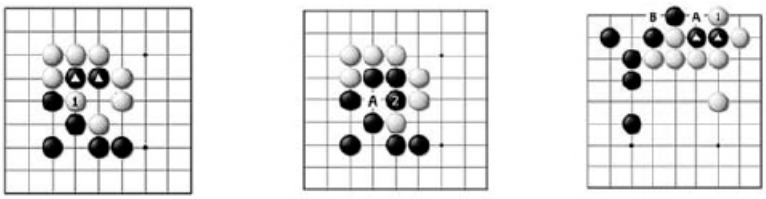

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3

Diagram 1 White 1 in Dia. 1 is an example of

throw-in used in a snapback. It seems to be dangerous for White to play at 1 in order to put the two ``▲'' -marked black stones in atari, because it throws White 1 itself in a tiger's mouth.

Diagram 2 However, if Black 2 captures it, then the three black stones (including Black 2) will have only one liberty at ``A.'' Now White can capture them by playing at A.

Throw-in and Continuous Atari:

Continuous atari is a shape where a connection to save a small part of a group in atari leads to another atari of an even larger group that includes the former one.

Diagram 3 This is a typical shape of a continuous atari. Against White atari with 1, Black cannot save the ``△'' -marked stones by connecting at ``A.'' If Black connects at A, it will cause atari to the bigger group, including the stone at A, and then White can capture them with ``B.''

If the method of throw-in and continuous atari are combined, even stones with more than two liberties can be captured, because throw-in is a clever way to lessen the liberties of enemy stones.

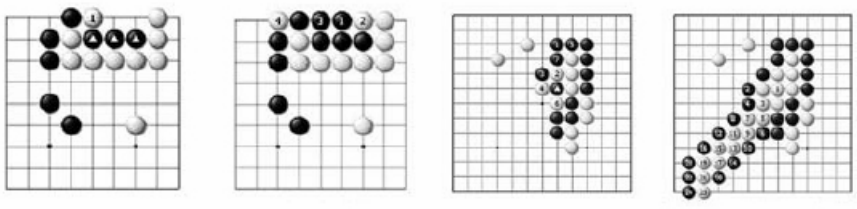

Diagram 4 Diagram 5 Diagram 6 Diagram 7

Diagram 4, 5 White 1 throws in the tiger's mouth at the edge. If Black captures it as shown in Dia. 5, White 2 can atari the four black stones. Now it is silly for Black to connect at 3 because it will result in the death of all the six stones. It is just like the saying, ``*when* you want to capture a tiger you must enter into the tiger's cave.''

Now you have been introduced to all the basic capturing techniques. Although the situations in a real game are much more complex than the examples we have examined, if you are familiar with them and analyze the circumstances around them carefully, you will be able to make the correct decisions as to which tactic should be used.

In addition, as we've seen in the case of the throw-in, capturing tactics can be used in combination with one another.

Diagram 6 In this example, the capturing tactics of a net, a continuous atari, and a ladder are used together. Against the net made by Black 1, White tries to get out with 2 to 6. When White 4 tries to escape by giving atari to the ``▲'' -marked black stone, Black will give atari back to the four white stones by playing at 5. After White captures the ▲-marked stone with 6, Black will make another atari at 7. The moves of Black 5 and 7 are continuous ataris.

Diagram 7 If White still connects at 1, Black starts to make a ladder with 2. From 3 to 24, White cannot be freed from the ladder and will be killed in the corner.

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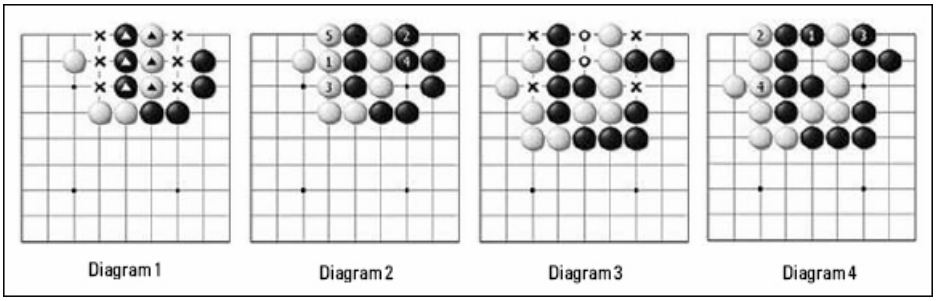
Lesson 19: Capturing Race

A capturing race is a local skirmish in which the stones of both sides are surrounded and each has at most one eye. In a capturing race, the first one to capture the opponent's stones wins the race and is able to save his own stones. Therefore each player should try to reduce the liberties of his opponent's stones.



Basic Model

Diagram 1 Both the ``▲'' marked white stones and the ``△'' -marked black stones are severed from their groups, and surrounded by the opponent's. In this situation, both sides must reduce the liberties of the opponent in order to save his own stones.

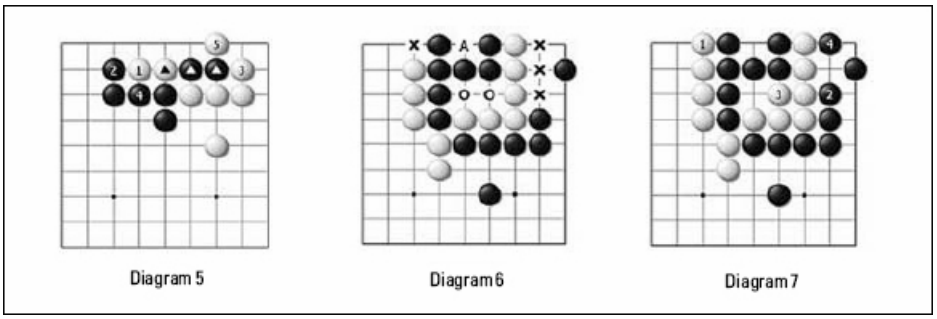
Diagram 2 When both groups in a capturing race have the same number of liberties, for example three liberties (marked by ``X'') respectively as shown in Dia. 1, the player who starts

to fill the liberties of the opponent will win the race. In Dia. 2, if it is White's turn to play, White can start to lessen the number of liberties of Black with 1. Then, even if Black follows to fill the White's liberties with 2, up to 5, it is White who can play atari first and win the race.

Block the Outside Liberties First

Diagram 3, 4 When your group is caught in a capturing race, you should first block the outside liberties in advance, and then the shared liberties. The outside liberty is the empty intersection which is concerned with only one group of stones, like the points marked with ``X'' in Dia. 3.

The shared liberty is one that is involved with both groups in a capturing race, like the points marked by 'O'. If Black blocks the shared liberties first, as in Dia. 4, it will suffer by being captured. On the contrary, if Black starts from blocking the outside liberties, the situation will result in a dual life. Please verify it by yourself.



Lengthen Your Liberties as Much as Possible Before Blocking

Diagram 5 The ``▲'' -marked white stone has two liberties, while the '△'-marked black stones have three, so it seems that the white stone will be captured. However, White can save his stone from danger since it is possible for him to increase the number of liberties from two to four by stretching at 1. When Black blocks at 2, because now Black and White have the same number of liberties, the player who can play first, White in this case, will win the race.

Inside Liberty and Eye vs. No Eye

The liberties in an eye shape of a group are called ``inside liberties.'' For example, the black group in the capturing race in Dia. 6 has an inside liberty at

``A.'' The existence of an eye, i.e. inside liberty, is critical for winning a capturing race.

Diagram 6, 7 Black has four liberties: two shared liberties at the points marked 'O', one inside liberty at 'A' and the outside one at 'X'. White has five liberties: three outside and two shared. So, it is apparent that White has one more liberty than Black, and so it seems White will win the race. But the situation is changed when there is a group having an eye, because the opponent cannot fill the inside liberty of the group. In Dia. 7, even if it is White's turn, after Black 4, there is no way for White to give atari to Black.

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Lesson 20: The Etiquette of Baduk

``Although baduk is a competitive game, the most important thing in playing is your mental attitude.'' This is a verse engraved on the wall of the main building of the Chinese Baduk Association. It can be paraphrased as follows: Even if baduk is a game of tactics, the first quality a player should keep is good manners.

Players of the three East-Asian countries, Korea, China, and Japan, have paid more attention to etiquette than skill throughout the game's history, and that is because of the abiding influence of Confucianism.

In this lesson, we will learn about proper manners in playing baduk.

Elementary school children play baduk at a competition hosted by a local government office in Kwangjin-gu, Seoul on Nov. 10. The baduk beginners are recommended to learn the etiquettes of the game before learning how to play.
/ Korea Times File

Ancient Baduk Etiquette:

The essence of baduk etiquette is embodied in respecting your opponent. The following is an example of how the old Chinese book *Yi Lu* (弈律, ``*The Rules of Baduk*'') regulated the players' manners.

``Telling lies by saying that a group will die, feigning joy or sadness, feigning surprise or entreaty, or disturbing the other person's mood is punished by 50 light lashes. This type of trickery is about aiming to cause the opponent to make a mistake by thinking that there is no other move here so that he plays elsewhere. Lying by saying that `that group will die' is referring to a group as dead when it is not clearly so and, in fact, is a trick to make him make the last move elsewhere. Feigning joy refers to saying `I have won, I have won' when the game is not yet over, and is a trick to cause the opponent to lose his attention on the game. Feigning sadness is showing a loss of fighting spirit by saying `that is hopeless' in a game one has not yet lost, and is a trick to reduce the opponent's attention on the game. Feigning surprise is suddenly noticing something and exclaiming `Ah so' and is a trick to make the opponent treat one lightly.'' (Translation by John Fairbairn)

Modern Etiquette:

Modern baduk etiquette is much simpler and easy to practice. By abiding the etiquette you can express respect to your opponent and also learn the profundity of baduk.

Here are the very basics you should keep during a game.

Respect Your Seniors and Elders:

The person with seniority should sit at the seat suitable for his or her status, which is often near the wall. The younger or weaker player should wipe the baduk board clean to express respect to his/her senior.

Expression of Friendship Before a Game Starts:

In Korea and Japan, players bow to each other to show respect before the game starts. Chinese players shake hands instead.

Correct Posture:

A baduk player should keep good posture while playing, namely sitting in a dignified manner. There is also a proper way to take a stone and place it on the board.

First Move:

The first move should be played at the upper-right corner, so that your opponent can also play the first move at his or her upper-right corner.

Stones Cannot Be Moved:

Unlike chess, once a baduk stone is placed on the board, it cannot be moved except when stones are captured and taken off the board.

Cleaning Up:

When a game is over, players should pick up the stones on the board, sort them, and return them to the bowls.

Review the Game:

When a game is finished, both players should review the game together, and discuss what they have done well and what they have done wrong, so that both can learn from the other.

Observers Cannot Make Comments:

The observers must keep quiet when watching a game.

In fact, it is not difficult to be a well-mannered baduk player. Just keep in mind that what is distasteful to you is likely distasteful to others.

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Lesson 21: The Lines (1)

Beginners always feel confused when they face an empty board. Where should they play first? For beginners, all the intersections on the board look the same. But, for a higher level player, when there is even a one-line difference in the position of stones, it is possible to discern a very different strategy.

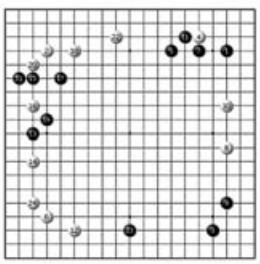

Diagram 1

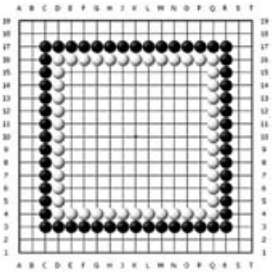

Diagram 2

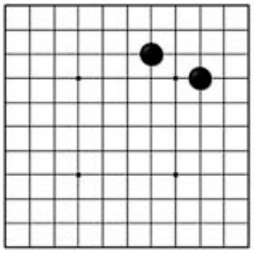

Diagram 3

Diagram.1 When we observe the game records of higher level players, we can recognize that they generally play on the third or fourth lines of the board during the opening stage. Why do they play there first? What are the qualities of the third and fourth lines?

The Third Line

Diagram.2 Black has surrounded all the territory of the first and second lines by occupying the intersections along the third line. On the other hand, White has surrounded the center territory of the board by playing moves along the fourth line. Whose territory is bigger?

At first glance, you may think that White's is bigger. However, after counting their territories carefully, it turns out that Black, in fact, has much more (White has 121 points while Black has 136). Although this is not a real game, at least we can see how effective playing on the third line is, for making territory. Therefore, before the 20th century, most Japanese players played on the third line in the opening.

Diagram.3 The position of the two black stones in the corner is called a ``corner enclosure,'' and is considered the most effective shape in making territory. Note that both stones are located on the third line.

In general, the third line is known as the ``line of profit,'' because one can easily make territory by playing along it, and usually don't need to worry about invasions under it.

The Fourth Line

The fourth line is just one line higher than the third one, but it produces a very different strategy. Plays can be more dynamic on the fourth line, and stones on it have more influence on the center area than stones on the third line. So, the fourth line is loved by modern players. However, it also has disadvantages. Compared with the stones on the third line, stones on the fourth line have less power to control the space underneath them.

The nickname for the fourth line is, therefore, ``line of influence,'' and it is not a good idea to try making territory along this line, because it is open to invasions.

The third and fourth lines have their own pros and cons, so we must use them well in different situations. More often than not, their advantages are combined harmoniously.

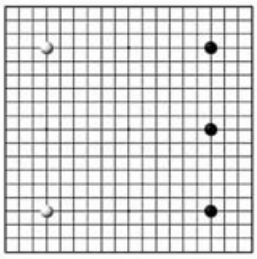

Diagram 4

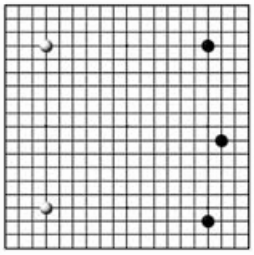

Diagram 5

Diagram 4 This is a very famous opening position, called the ``three-star formation.'' The three black stones are lined up on the fourth line. The advantage of this formation is that it can be extended fast and may surround bigger space. On the other hand, the opponent also has more room for invasion. Therefore, this formation is usually favored by people who have strong confidence in their fighting skills.

Diagram 5 This opening is known as the ``Chinese Opening.'' This formation, with its mixture of the third line and the fourth line, is able to be more flexible according to the changing situations.

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Lesson 22: The Lines (2)

There are 19 horizontal lines and 19 vertical lines on a regular Baduk board, as you know, and the functions of each line are different. As mentioned in the previous lesson, the main function of the third line is making territory, so it is called the ``Line of Profit.'' The fourth line is used for building up strength toward the center, so it is called the ``Line of Influence.'' There are two more lines that have typical characteristics distinguishing them from the aforementioned two.

The Second Line: Line of Defeat

The second line is called the ``Line of Defeat." Theoretically, the moves played on the second line can make only one point of territory per move, so they are very inefficient.

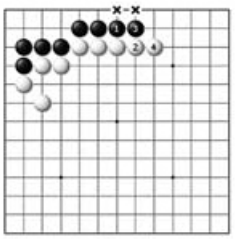

Diagram 1

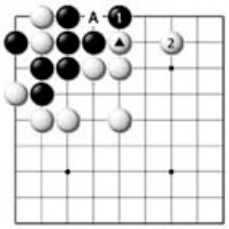

Diagram 2

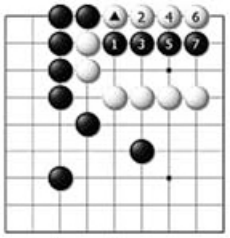

Diagram 3

Diagram 1 Black 1 and 3 crawl along the second line and make only two points at x-marked points. In contrast, White 2 and 4, stretching as the replies to Black 1 and 3, make the White's wall even stronger. It is obvious that the wall White made is worth much more than the two points Black got, since the latter is limited and has almost no room to expand, while the former has the power to affect the battles that may come up in the future and has a big promise of territory as well.

The First Line: Line of Death

Another name for the first line is the "Line of Death" because one cannot make an eye shape by playing on it. The stones on this line will all eventually die.

Diagram 2 The Black group has one eye in the corner but it is impossible for Black to make another eye by playing on the first line. The point at 'A' is a false eye as being wedged by the '▲'-marked white stone.

Another defect of the first line is that a stone cannot increase the number of liberties on it. When stones are in atari and there is only one way of escape left along the first line, it is better for you to give up the stones.

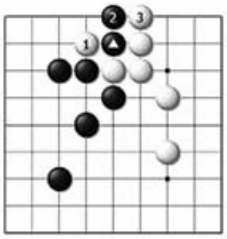

Diagram 4

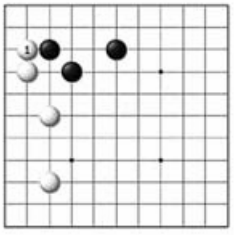

Diagram 5

Diagram 3 When Black 1 gives atari the '▲'-marked white stone, White should not escape with 2 because it will not increase the number of liberties and only results in the death of all 2, 4 and 6.

Diagram 4 When the '▲'-marked black stone gets in atari by White 1, it is useless for Black to come down to the first line to save it. White will atari with 3 and there is no escape for Black.

Play at the Second and First Lines at Endgame

The names of ``Line of Defeat'' and ``Line of Death'' for the second line and the first line don't mean that all the stones played there are useless. The evaluation of the second and the first lines is relative. Calling them ``defeat and death'' is valid when the game is at the opening stage, and even truer in the middle of the game. However, if the game is at the endgame phase, the second and the first lines become good places to play in. For example, White 1 is very good endgame move, which is worth more than 15 points.

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Lesson 23: The Opening (1)

In Baduk, as in Chess, there are three main phases of a game: the opening, the middle game, and the endgame. The skills and techniques that you've learned in the previous lessons should be used according to the phases.

Opening

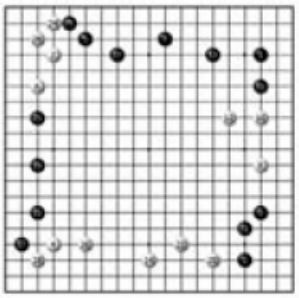

Diagram 1

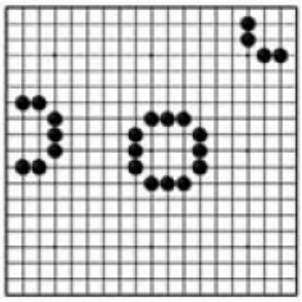

Diagram 2

The opening is the initial stage of a game where the players place stones in preparation for the middle-game-fighting and for making territory.

As a beginner, it would be better for you to know first what the main purpose of the opening is, and then learn how to achieve the object of the opening. We all know that the ultimate goal of baduk is to surround more territory than the opponent. Therefore, if you succeed during the opening in positioning your stones properly where you can make territory or restrain the opponent from making a large territory, you will feel very easy in the middle game. In short, the opening stage is to build up a framework for the whole game.

Beginners often complain that they cannot understand the meaning of the stone positioning in the opening, but see only black and white stones placed at random. Quite the contrary, every move played in the opening has its meaning and intention. Let's see the meaning of some of the moves.

Diagram 1: This is a very normal opening. As you see, the first four moves occupy the four corners, and then the battlefield is spread from the corners to the sides. When the opening is finished, most stones are placed on the third or the fourth line, and they are not close to each other but keep a certain distance. Why do the players play this way?

From the Corners to the Sides

Diagram 2: We can infer from this diagram that there is a difference in making territory in the corner, side, and center. To surround 9 points of territory, 12 stones are needed in the center, 7 stones on the side, and only 4 stones in the corner. Thus, corners are the best places to make territory, then the sides, and it is most inefficient to spend stones in building up territory in the center.

On the Third and the Fourth Lines

In the last two lessons, you have learned what each line is for and that the third and the fourth lines are respectively for territory and influence. Because of this, stones are played on the third and the fourth lines during the opening stage. In Dia.1 there are 23 moves on the third or the fourth line out of the total 27 moves.

Keeping a Certain Distance

The efficiency in making territory and the safety of the territory are sometimes at odds with each other. It is important to keep a certain distance in the stones' position, to maintain a good balance between efficiency and safety. Usually the proper distance is decided according to how strong the stones are.

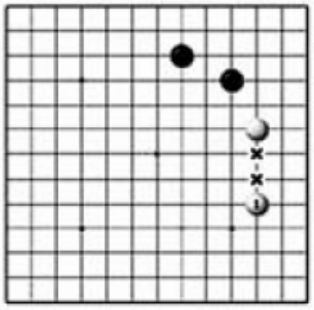

Diagram 3

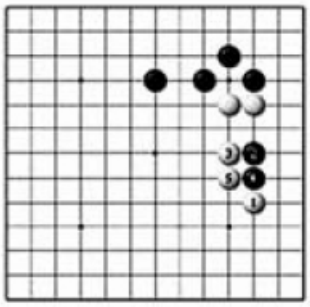

Diagram 4

Diagram 3, 4 There is a proverb saying that ``if one, extend two, if two, extend three.'' Hence, the stronger your stones, the larger the extension you can make, and so the bigger opportunity to make more territory. The white stones on the right sides in Dia.3 and Dia.4 follow the proverb well. White 1 in Dia.3 made a two-point extension since it had only one friendly stone supporting it. While, in Dia.4, White could extend 3 points because he had two allying stones. If Black invades white's territory in the middle of the extension as shown in Dia.4, White will cover it with 3 and 5, then Black has to go through a harsh attack if he wants to save his stones.

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Lesson 24: The Opening (2)

Occupying an Empty Corner

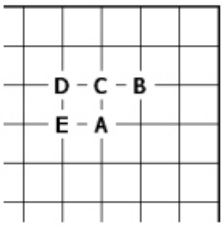

Diagram 1

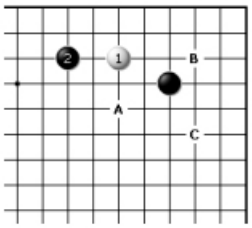

Diagram 2

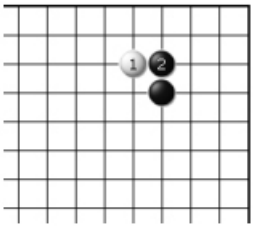

Diagram 3

The opening always starts from corners where territory can be made most effectively. Therefore, it is an important and urgent task to occupy the corners before your opponent does.

Diagram 1: There are five usual points when occupying a corner.

``A,'' the *4-4 point,* is also called a *star point* (*hwajom* in Korean). Because it is located in a very balanced position, you can play at a star point regardless of the surrounding situation. A star point also helps you to extend fast, so modern players who like a quick-developing game prefer it. However, as it is a point where two fourth lines (the lines of influence) meet, it has a defect in keeping a corner completely. If the opponent invades with ``B,'' it is almost impossible to capture it.

``B'' is called the *3-3 point* (samsam in Korean)

``C'' is called the *3-4 point* (*somok* in Korean). Until the 20th century, it had been the most popular point because it can control the corner more safely than a star point and has more possibilities to make a larger territory than the 3-3 point. Also, the combination of a 3-4 point and a knight enclosure can create perfect harmony to keep a corner.

``D'' is called the *3-5 point* (*oemok* in Korean) and ``E'' is called the *4-5 point* (komok in Korean)

Approaching the Corners

In Baduk, an ``approach'' means a move closing in on an opponent's stone occupying a corner.

Diagram 2: White 1 is a knight's approach against the black stone on the star point. Why do you think White chose the point one line away from the black stone? By keeping the distance from the opponent stone, White can advance or retreat at his own will. If Black attacks him with 2, he can choose between jumping out at ``A'' to fight, and invading at ``B'' to take the corner. If Black ignores the approach, White can attack the black stone in the corner by playing at ``C.''

Diagram 3: On the contrary, if White gets too close to the black stone, Black will block with 2 to defend the corner and attack the white stone at the same time.

Diagram 4: It shows several kinds of approaches to a 3-4 point. ``A'' is called a one-point approach, ``B'' is a knight's approach, ``C'' is a large knight's approach and ``D'' is a two-space approach.

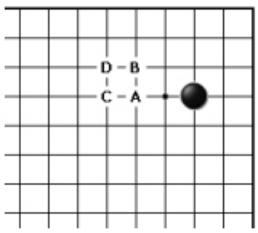

Diagram 4

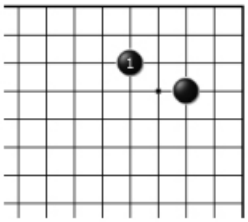

Diagram 5

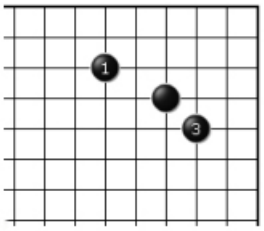

Diagram 6

Enclosing the Corners

If you have a chance to add moves to your own corner, what would you do?

Diagram 5: The knight's move at 1 is the most usual enclosure for a 3-4 point. As mentioned above, it is a perfect way to keep a corner.

Diagram 6: To safely enclose a corner occupied by a star point, you need two moves at 1 and 3. These two moves on the third lines make up the defect of the star point and block a possible invasion by White.

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Lesson 25: The Opening (3)

Corner Patterns

When your opponent approaches your stone in a corner, it is usual for you to answer the approach. Generally, there are two ways to answer the approach, to extend your territory or to ``pincer'' the approaching stone from the other side. If you extend, then your opponents will do the same thing. If you pincer, then you may fight a battle. Hence, these moves compose a formulaic sequence, which we call a ``corner pattern.'' The patterns give equally beneficial outcomes to both players. Therefore, it is helpful for you to memorize some basic ones.

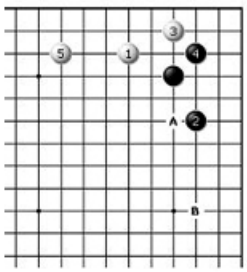

Diagram 1

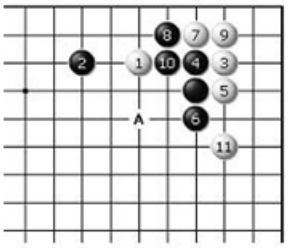

Diagram 2

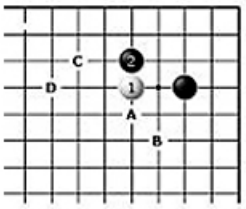

Diagram 3

4-4 Point Pattern

Diagram 1 White approaches Black's star point with 1 and Black replies with a knight's move to another side with 2. Black 2 means that he will let White settle on the upper side with 3 and 5 while he plays elsewhere with his next move. Black can also choose a one-space jump at ``A'' instead of 2, and then the sequence will be almost the same as before except for the fact that Black should add one more move, extending with ``B.'' The territory Black gets is surely bigger than before, but now it is White's turn.

Diagram 2 If you pincer, the following situation will become more dynamic. Here, the black stone on the star point and Black 2 make a pincer to attack White 1. In this case, White can choose between jumping out toward the center and intruding into the 3-3 point. White's jumping out will lead to a fight while intruding in the corner always ends with a peaceful result. By move 11, White takes the territory in the corner that used to belong to Black, and Black builds influence instead.

There are also many kinds of pincers; a two-space pincer, three-space pincer, low and high. Usually, the closer the pincer is, the more aggressive the attack.

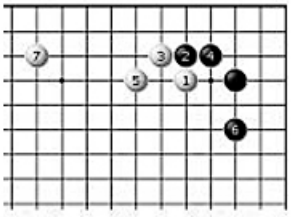

Diagram 4

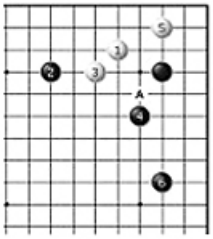

Diagram 5

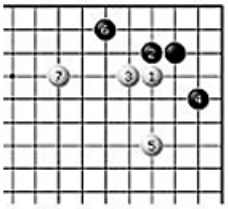

Diagram 6

3-4 Point Pattern

Diagram 3 There are many ways to answer White 1, including Black 2 and ``A'' to ``D.'' Since the results change according to the answering moves, you should know the variations and choose the right one for the surrounding situation.

Diagram 4 If Black answers with 2, then the sequence up to 7 is a popular pattern. Since Black surrounds the corner successfully and White gets the territory at the upper side, both sides are happy.

Diagram 5 For White 1, Black 2 can be an answer. While White 3 and 5 make a base in the corner, Black can extend its territory to the side. Black ``A'' will lead another pattern which is simpler and safer for Black.

3-3 Point Pattern

Diagram 6 White 1 is called a shoulder-hit. Because Black has occupied the 3-3 point, Black has no choice but to stick to the corner. While Black profits in the corner, White builds influence outside. If White can play this pattern when there is already other influence corresponding to it, it can become territory and we can say that White's opening is successful.

There are so many patterns and variations in the corners so that you can compile a dictionary-sized volume about them. Moreover, they keep changing! Therefore, it is impossible to memorize all of them, and there is a famous proverb that says, ``forget the patterns after you have learned them.''

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Lesson 26: The Opening (4)

Famous Formations 1

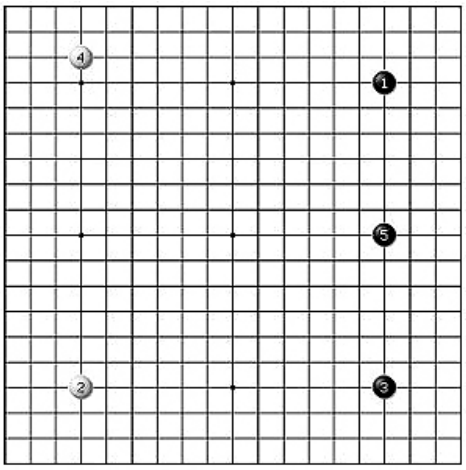

Diagram 1

In Baduk, the opening may be the easiest part to learn, yet the hardest to master. If you have learned the basic opening principles, it is possible for you to imitate even the openings of professionals until a certain point and pretend to be strong.

On the other hand, even world-class players sometimes do not know what the best move is. The baduk board is too big, especially during the opening stage, so that it is not always possible to find the best move at a given moment.

Hence, there are several opening formations invented by the experts as examples of ideal openings. In this lesson, you're going to see some popular opening formations. You can just imitate them at first, but it is not enough to just follow the sequences without extracting principles from these examples.

Diagram 1 The three-star formation is one of the most famous opening patterns in which Black occupies all three star points of one side with 1, 3 and 5. This opening enables Black to make a strong wall toward the center, and so players of the influential style love it. Because of the property of this opening, it has a nickname, the ``Cosmic Style.'' (The star point in the center is called Chonwon (천원, 天元) which means ``the center of the universe,'' because the ancient regarded the baduk board as a symbol of the cosmos.)

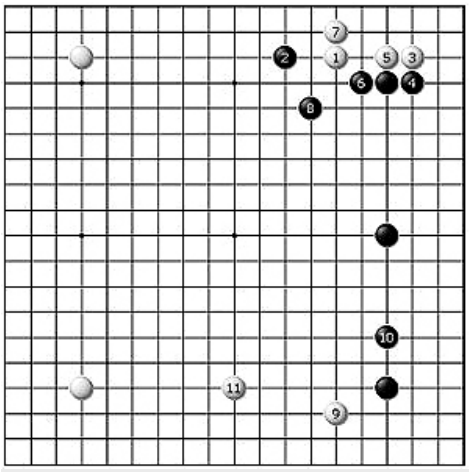

Diagram 2

However, the formation has a disadvantage; it lets the opponent gain profit in advance and makes the player himself struggle in building territory out of the potential influence. It is somewhat risky, because if the opponent succeeds in invalidating the influence, the player would be left lacking territory.

As you may guess, almost all famous opening formations are made from Black's point of view, because it is easier for Black to lead the game as he intends to. This is why Black is usually preferred in even games, despite the fact that Black has to give a compensation of 6.5 points to White.

Diagram 2 Black 2 leads a popular pattern in a three-star formation. As a result of the pattern here, Black can build up a nice wall outside. In this case, Black 10 is also a proper answer to White's approach 9, well matched with the shape in the upper right corner. Now Black should make an effort to develop the right center to his influence by using the formation of the right side.

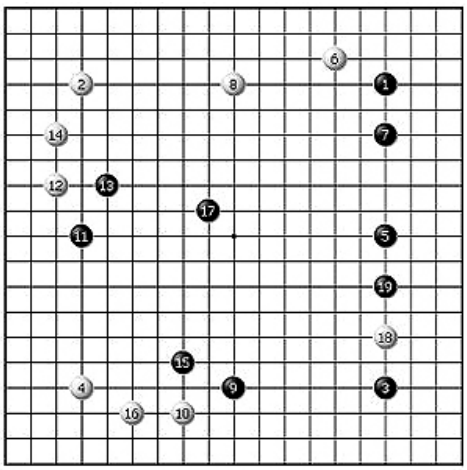

Diagram 3

Diagram 3 This is a game played by the Japanese 9-dan professional, Takemiya Masao, the player who is famous for insisting on using this opening style whenever he holds Black. The distinguishing feature of this opening is the fact that there are no moves by Black played under the fourth line. Black 13 and 15 are placed on the fifth line, and Black 17 is in the center, even though it is still during the opening stage of a game. It is apparent how much Black emphasizes developing the center.

Another property of the opening is the speed of the moves. From 7 to 11, Black switches battle fields doing different tasks. Then, with 13, 15 and 17, Black broadens the influence in the center. Since Black's framework on the lower right is so big, White cannot help but invade with 18. From now on, Black will get territorial profit by attacking White 18 with the help of the stones in the center.

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Lesson 27: The Opening (5)

The Chinese Opening

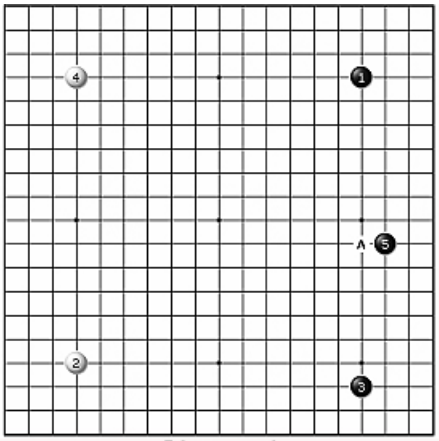

Diagram 1

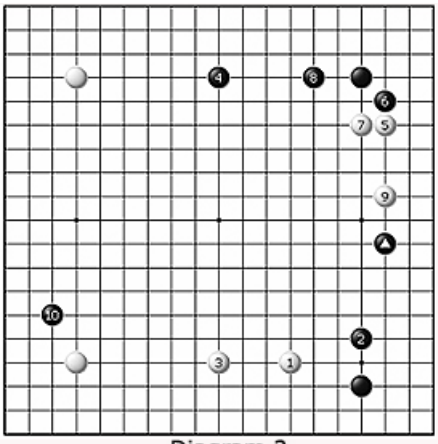

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 The Basic Formation

Compared with the three-star formation that is arranged neatly in a line, this opening looks irregular. However, it allowed Chinese professionals to defeat Japanese pros in the 1960s and got the name, the *Chinese opening*.

Black 1 on the star point and Black 3 on the 4-3 point work harmoniously and let Black have the advantage in moving fast and in building territory. Black 5 is the finishing touch of this formation. It follows the principle of combining the third and the fourth lines, and makes the shape efficient and beautiful. If we can say that the three-star formation represents the philosophical concept of ``Yang,'' the Chinese opening represents both ``Yin'' and ``Yang.'' The former has the strong and propulsive character, while the later is soft and balanced.

Black 5 can also be played at ``A.'' When played on the third line, it is the ``low Chinese opening,'' and when on the fourth line, it is the ``high Chinese opening.''

The Use of the ``△'' -Marked Stone

Diagram 2 It is not easy for White to approach at 2 as in a normal situation, because the ``△'' -marked black stone already took the space where White should extend. There is a proverb, ``when you approach, approach from the broader side.'' So, in this case, White 1 can be a way of approaching Black's corner. Black 2 is the simplest way to enclose the corner and there is no reason for Black to complain about this. White 3 and Black 4 are ordinary extending moves. Now, despite the abovementioned saying, it is usual for White to approach from the right side. If White approaches from the upper side, Black's territory on the right side will become too big and invulnerable. The problem is, however, that White still cannot have enough space to extend because of the existence of the △-marked stone. This is what the △-marked stone is for.

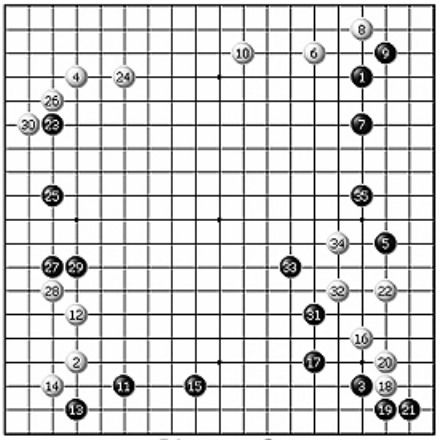

Diagram 3

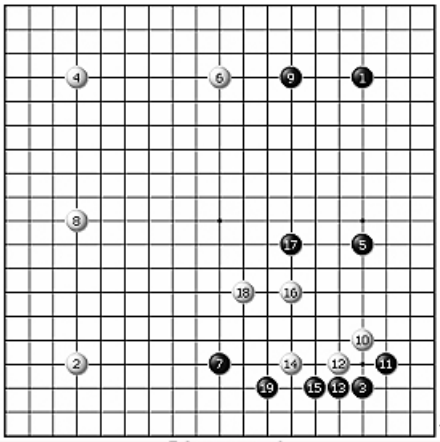

Diagram 4

Diagram 3 If White approaches from the right side with 16 as in Dia. 3, then Black can profit through an attack. As you see, Black has already made two large territories on the right and the lower sides in 35 moves. Because White couldn't secure enough space to live on the right side, even though he extends with 22, Black drove the white group toward center and made territories at the same time. It is the best way to make territory by attacking the weak group, since the opponent can have no time to invade your territory.

You may also notice that the same pattern is played in three corners. It is very useful for you to remember this pattern, because it is the most popular one.

Diagram 4: High Chinese Opening

The difference between the low and high Chinese openings lies in the choice of emphasis. Against White 10, Black 11 means to allow White no space to have its base and force him to jump out to the center. We have seen this kind of chasing White toward center in Dia. 3, but it is faster and more severe in Dia. 4. Because Black 5 is located on the fourth line, Black can continue the attack with 17 and develop the center.

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Lesson 28: The Middle Game 1

It is said that the middle game begins when the opening is finished, and the opening usually ends following 40 to 50 moves. After the outline of territory has been set, you start to think about how to enlarge your territory, or at least how to defend it, and also how to reduce the opponent's territory.

Compared with the opening, the middle game is more difficult to learn, because there is no pattern, no formation to follow. During the opening, it is possible for you to stick to developing your own territory; i.e. just mind your own business. But in the middle game, you should check your opponent so that he doesn't get more territory, which leads both players to fight often, and there is no standard rule in those fights.

On the other hand, owing to the complexity of the conflicts, the middle game is regarded as the most interesting part out of the three main phases of a Baduk game. Players depend on nothing but their own reading abilities, and no one can tell what will happen at a certain point.

There are at least two main concepts in the middle game; we call them attack and defense. These two are the beginning and the end of all possible fights.

The Attack

It is not possible to attack all the opponent's stones, all the time. You can attack only when your opponent shows a weakness.

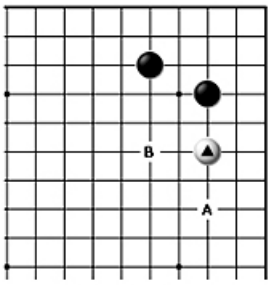

Diagram 1

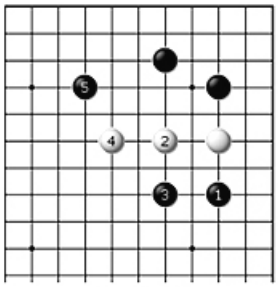

Diagram 2

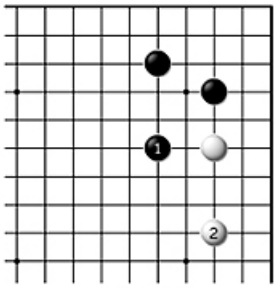

Diagram 3

Diagram 1 The '▲'-marked white stone is alone near Black's enclosed corner. If it is Black's turn, which place is correct for Black's attack on the white stone, 'A' or 'B'?

Diagram 2 'A' is the correct choice. Black 1 and 3 push White to go out to the center without a solid base, and as a result, Black 5 can make territory on the upper-side without difficulty.

Diagram 3 Meanwhile, to play from above is not an attack. It is too easy for White to make a base with a two-space extension at 2, and there is no possibility for Black to continue attacking these two white stones.

Diagram 4 This shows a way to attack a stone approaching in the three-star formation. When White approaches from the side where you've set the three-star formation, Black should take advantage of the formation to attack it. Black 2 and 4 form a pattern (jungsuk) which prohibits White from having a base in the corner. Black 6 is also for confining the white group in the narrow place that does not have enough space to make two eyes. Therefore, White cannot help but to go out to the center with 7 and 9 while Black gets influence on the lower right area by chasing them with 8 and 10.

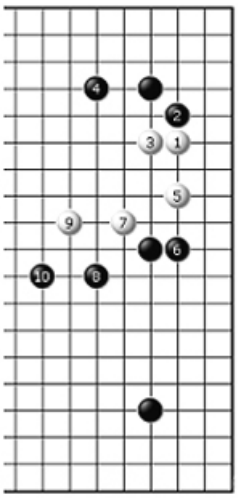

Diagram 4

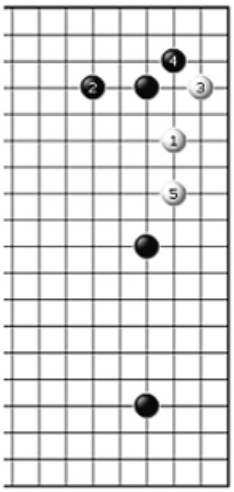

Diagram 5

Diagram 5 If Black chooses the most popular pattern with 2 and 4, White can easily make a base from 1 to 5. The outcome of the pattern is not perfectly equal for both players, since White couldn't extend with 5 as much as he wanted. But, the overall situation is less satisfactory for Black than for White. Because Black had a lead on the right side, it is obvious that White is more powerful on the left side. Baduk is a game of taking turns, so you cannot get all the profit alone. Therefore, it is very important to get as much profit as possible in the area where you have an advantage. In Dia. 5, Black has failed to do so.

From the above examples, we can assume that an attack begins by eliminating the opponent's base, which sounds like the natural thing to do. However, by taking off your opponent's base, you can only start an attack. The more important thing is to know the purpose of attacking. This is the topic of the next lesson.

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Lesson 29: The Middle Game 2

You can capture your opponent's group of stones through an attack, but to kill the opponent's stones is not the ultimate goal of attacking. In a nutshell, the purpose of attacking is to gain profit. Capturing stones is one of the profits, but you can also profit by strengthening your influence or expanding the territorial framework through an attack.

In theory, it is not difficult to understand the purpose of an attack, but it is easily forgotten during a real game. Some people just enjoy attacking in itself, and some people like to kill the opponent's stones. For them, often an attack ends with no gains and sometimes results in the player's own danger.

It is very important as well as difficult to know when to stop an attack, and how much profit you can gain in the attack. There isn't an absolute answer for this. What you should always have in mind is the fact that Baduk is a game won by a relative score. If you gain enough to win against your opponent, then that is when you should stop. If you place your own stones in danger through an attack, then the situation doesn't warrant such a strong offensive move.

Conversely, with an appropriate attack, you can gain more from the situational advantage that you already have. There are many ways to improve your potential advantage, such as studying attack skills, developing your reading ability, and so on. However, the most important and fundamental skill is knowing the correct direction of the chase.

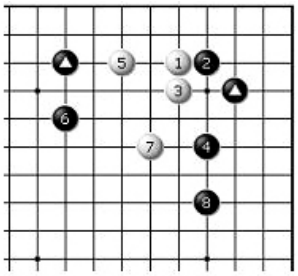

Diagram 1

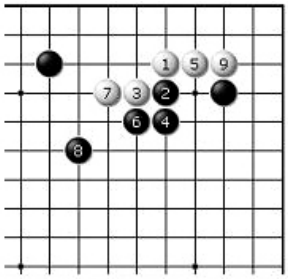

Diagram 2

Diagram 1

Since White 1 comes into the narrow space between the two ``△'' -marked black stones, it cannot help but suffer from an attack of Black. Black 2 makes the space narrower so that White doesn't have enough space to extend, and Black 6 drives White to jump out to the center and gives himself a chance to build territory on the right side. In short, to hunt White toward the center is the right direction in this case and Black takes maximum benefit from the advantageous situation.

Diagram 2

It is not a good idea for Black to struggle with 2 to 8 in order to block the white stones from going out to the center. First of all, it is unpleasant for Black to let White so easily occupy the corner that used to be his, when White is an intruder. Surely Black can build a wall outside, but the potential profit of an influence is difficult to estimate and also depends on the circumstance around it. If there is a weak group of the opponent, then it can exercise its power, but there is no weak White group in this situation.

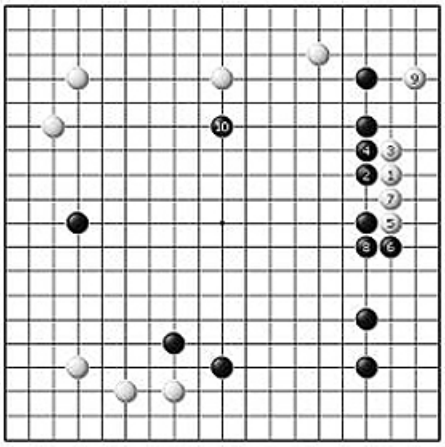

Diagram 3

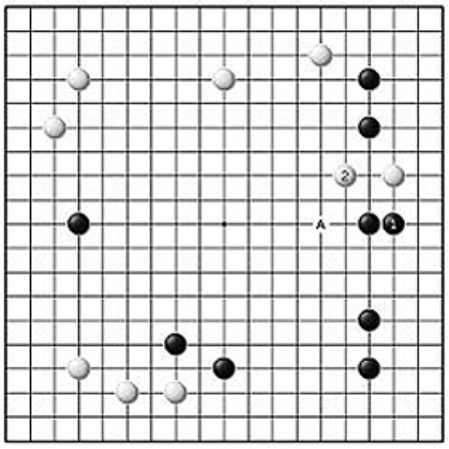

Diagram 4

Diagram 3

Sometimes, one choice is to let the weak group live and construct an outside influence instead. When White 1 invades Black's area on the right side, the attachment at 2 forces White to seek life under the third line. Instead, Black can build an influence outside through 2 to 10. Though Black loses territory on the side, the influence is big enough to allow Black to expect a larger territory in the future.

Diagram 4

Black 1 means to prohibit White from having a base on the side and push him to go out to the center, which will leave both players uncertain about what is coming later. Black can build a big framework by attacking the two white stones with ``A,' ' but also has to mind the safety of the two stones in the upper-right corner. The choice between the two diagrams is up to the player' s style, but I prefer to play as in Dia. 3.

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Lesson 30: Attacking Techniques

When attacking enemy stones, it is usually better for you to keep some distance from them. Imagine that you' re fighting someone, and that there are some friends of yours around to help you if needed. It is not wise to fight one-onone each time in this situation because you can' t use your circumstantial advantages.

In this case, it is better for you to confine your opponent in an area where your party has control and wait for a good time to attack him strongly. Similarly in Baduk, the first thing you should remember is not to come too close to the enemy stones that you' re attacking.

In this lesson, I will show you some attack moves that are very similar to those used when surrounding territory. They will help you attack easily and gain more profit.

1. Diagonal Move (Diagrams 1-3)

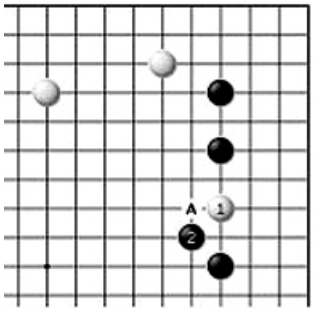

Diagram 1

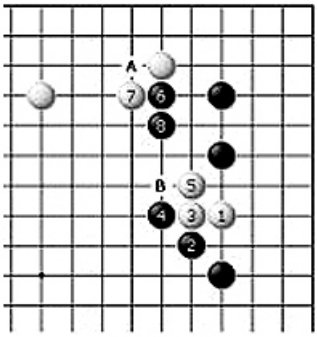

Diagram 2

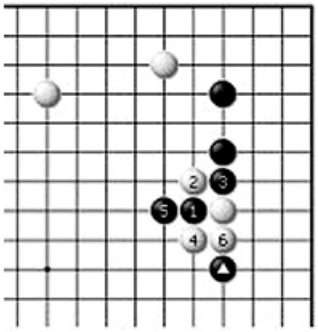

Diagram 3

Diagram 1: The diagonal move shown in Dia. 1 as Black 2 is good for attacking when your opponent invades in between the three-space extension. It assists the lonely black stone and forces White 1 to go out with "A."

Diagram 2: As to White' s attempt to push out toward center, it is good for Black to block with 4 and make White unable to do anything but form the infamous shape, namely the empty triangle, with 5. If White bends at "B" instead of 5, Black will cut at 5. The attachment at 6 is a more advanced attacking tactic than 2 and 4.

As mentioned above, it is not good to attach at the weak stones under attack, but the white stone on the upper side is not the target of this attack. The attachment is to help the attack occurring on the right side by doing two things. The first is making the white stone of the upper side answer, and the second is forming a wall to block the white stones attempting to escape on the right side.

After the exchange of moves 7 and 8, there are now two points that White wishes to protect, namely A and B.

Diagram 3: It would be very naive for Black to try to block immediately by attaching at 1. White can easily come out into the open space by sacrificing White 2, and then the tables are turned. As you see, The "¡a"-marked black stone is left in a disadvantageous position and becomes a target of White' s counterattack.

2. Knight' s Move (Diagrams 4-6)

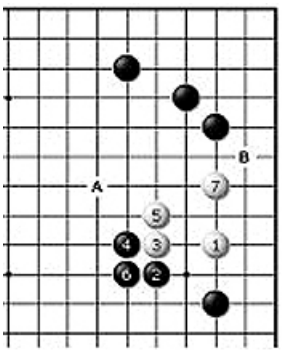

Diagram 4

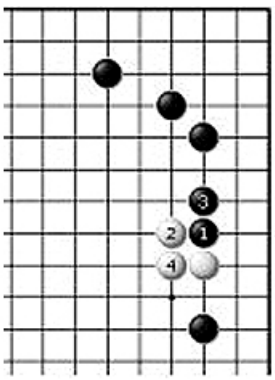

Diagram 5

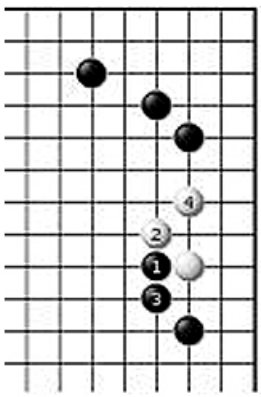

Diagram 6

Diagram 4: Black 2 attacking White 1 with knight' s move is the best choice in this situation. Black is going to surround the white stones but not fight against them. When White tries to go out with 3 and 5, Black will just let them do so and strengthen its outside influence with 4 and 6. White' s

extending at 7 is not wide enough to make a life on the right side, and Black can choose between blocking outside to build an integral influence with "A," and keep attacking the white stones by threatening White's base with "B."

Diagram 5: This is an example of a failed attack. Black comes too close to the weak stone so that he cannot help but answer to White's bend. White can get a stronger shape than before with 2 and 4, while Black spends two moves in gaining little territory and loses a good chance to attack.

Diagram 6: The attachment from above is a little bit better than the attachment in Dia. 5, since it at least picks the correct direction for attack. However, it is less recommendable than the knight's move shown in Dia. 4 because it helps White to make a tiger's mouth, a good shape for making eyes, with 2 and 4. Therefore, remember that in most cases, to attach is worse than not to attach.

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Lesson 31: Shape

In Baduk, ``shape'' means the relationship between the friendly stones, which affects the strength and safety of stones, and the ability to surround territory. So, when we place stones on the board, we should try to construct good shapes.

First of all, let's study the basic qualities of a good shape:

- Having enough eye space or eye shape
- Each stone being used efficiently
- Having no weak point or cutting point

Let's compare the next two diagrams which will help us to understand the good and the bad shapes.

Diagram 1

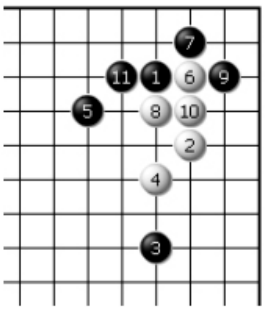

Diagram 1

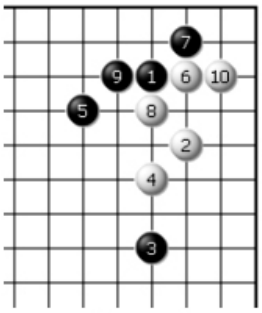

Diagram 2

The five white stones are connected well and there is no cutting point. Then is it a good shape? Let's judge it by using the three properties of the good shape.

Firstly, it doesn't have enough space to make eyes, nor are the stones being used efficiently to make territory. The only value it has is strength, since there is no weak point or cutting point. In short, this shape doesn't agree with two of the three requirements. As to the last condition, it is usually good not to have weaknesses, but if you pile up many stones for safety reasons, that in itself may sometimes cause inefficiency.

Diagram 2

In contrast, the shape of White in this diagram is much better than the one in Dia.1. It has plenty of eye-shapes and also more territory. Perhaps you can complain about the small size of the territory, but actually the white group was in a defending position because he approached Black's corner. So, the resulting situation is satisfactory for him.

In the above two diagrams, only one different move, White 10 in both diagrams, changes the whole situation. Let's go back to the 9th move in Dia. 1.

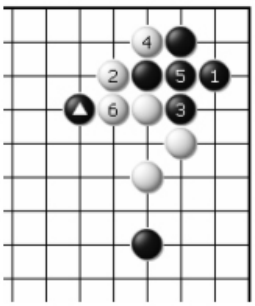

Diagram 3

Diagram 3

Black 1 (the 9th move in the diagrams above) is not advantageous. White will make a counter-atari with 2 instead of tolerating the situation by connecting at 3 as in Dia. 1. Black should capture a white stone with 3, White will atari again with 4, and then Black will connect at 5. The resulting situation up to 6 is not good for Black because the ``△'' -marked black stone is separated from his allies and is helpless. On the other hand, the shape of the white group is good, for every stone is placed where there is use. Therefore, in fact, Black shouldn't atari at 9 in Dia. 1 and the correct sequence is the one in Dia. 2, in which Black retreats with 9 and lets White get the good point, 10.

In a Good Shape, Stones Are Placed Efficiently.

It would be best if all the stones are spent efficiently in Baduk, where resources are limited. In other words, in a bad shape, you will find that some stones are being wasted.

Diagram 4

This is the result of the sequence of Dia. 1. Here, the '▲' -marked white stone doesn't affect any stones of the opponent, nor does it help his own stones. There would be almost no difference for white's situation even without this stone, and White could have saved a turn for a more advantageous move. We can say, therefore, that this White's shape is bad.

When you know how to distinguish the good shapes from the bad, what you need to do is not to memorize the good shapes, but to try not to make the bad shapes. For example, if you anticipate through your reading that you will have a bad shape, you should find other moves to avoid the bad result instead of doing what will apparently bring the bad outcome.

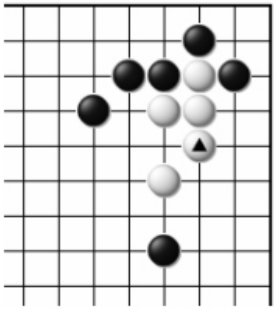

Diagram 4

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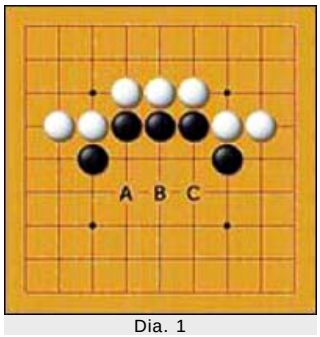
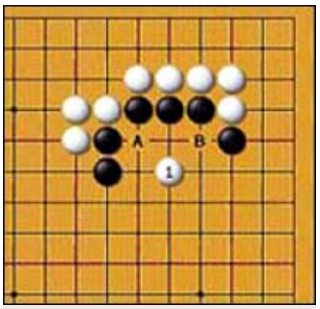
Lesson 32: Vital Point of Shapes Part I

It can be said that the shape of stones in baduk roughly corresponds to the function of each piece in Chess. Individual stones are not characterized by their movement or use, but when they are gathered and composed into shapes, they have their own characteristics. It is very important to know where the vital point of a shape is. The movement of stones, the possibility of being attacked, and even life and death are all dependent on it.

There are countless shapes of stones so that even professionals cannot tell where the vital point is sometimes, but some of them are easily found even by a beginner. Guess where the vital points are in the following diagram. It is White's turn. Just use your intuition. Where would you play among A, B, and C?



Dia. 1



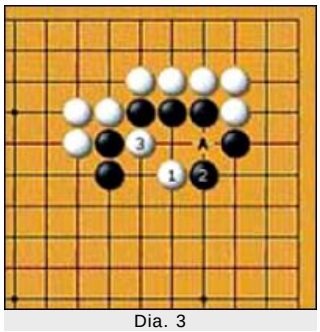
Dia. 2

You must have chosen ``B.'' That is the correct answer. See, you have the instinct to find a shape's vital point. Let's see why it should be ``B.''

The Center of Three Stones

Diagram 2 : Black has two cutting points at A and B, but it is impossible for White to cut one of them directly. If White cuts at ``A,'' Black will capture it with a net, and if B, Black will capture it with a ladder. Therefore, in this case, White 1 in the middle of the three ``△'' -marked black stones is a good move, aiming at both cutting points.

Although Black's shapes in Dia. 1 and Dia. 2 are not exactly the same, you can easily sense the morphological similarity. When there are three stones blocked by the opponent on both edges like this, the center of the three stones is the vital point.



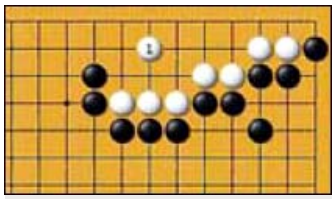
Dia. 3

Dia. 4

Even if you take the vital point of the opponent, it is not always fatal. However, it is always possible for you to make his life difficult at least.

Diagram 3: For Black, making a tiger's mouth with 2 seems to be a good shape to make, but then White will cut at 3, aiming to capture the three stones with a snapback.

Diagram 4: Therefore, Black's best move in the situation is Black 2. Then White can make the black stones into a mere line with no eyes up to 4. It is apparent that Black will go through hardship to rescue these stones.

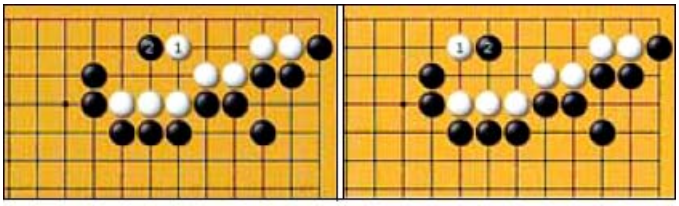


Dia. 5

Diagram 5: The center point of three stones is also helpful for strengthening your own stones. Here, White 1 is the only move that can save the white stones in the corner.

It is obvious that White 1 in Dia. 5 is a vital point of the shape, because if White plays other moves as in Dia. 6 and Dia. 7, Black will kill him by playing right on the center of the three stones.

In this lesson, you have learned the meaning of the proverb, 'the vital point of three stones is the center,' through examples. In addition to this, you may have also guessed the meaning of the famous proverb, 'your enemy's vital point is yours.' As you've seen in the last three diagrams, if a point is good for one player, it is also good for the other.



Dia. 6 Dia. 7

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Lesson 33: Vital Point of Shapes 2

In the previous lesson, we saw that a vital point for one player is also vital for the other. Then, can we now presume that a good point in one sense is always good?

Where the Opponent Can Make a Good Shape

Diagram 1, 2 Bamboo Joint

The *Bamboo joint* is a well-known strong shape for making a connection. Let's compare Dia.1 with Dia. 2. Black 1 in both

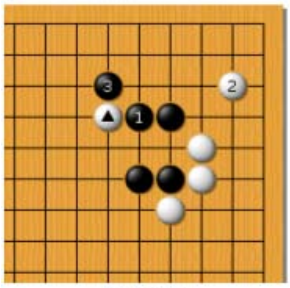

Diagram 1

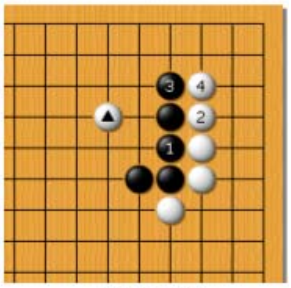

Diagram 2

diagrams are trying to connect his stones, but the results are different. While Black 1 in Dia. 1, making a bamboo joint, presses the marked white stone and leaves a possibility of playing 3, the solid connection at 1 in Dia. 2 doesn't have any influence against

the marked white stone and makes the whole group of black stones helpless.

As shown above, the bamboo joint is a very good shape, and the point where your opponent can make this shape is also good for you.

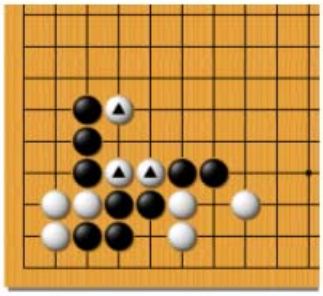

Diagram 3

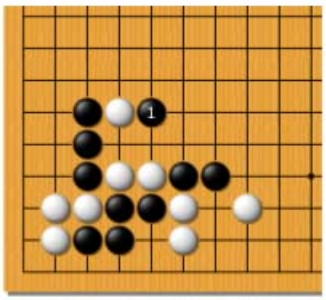

Diagram 4

Diagram 3, 4

The four black stones on the lower side would be dead if Black cannot capture the marked white stones. You may guess how to capture them using what you've learned above. Yes, the answer is Black 1 in Dia. 4, the point where White can make a bamboo joint shape. Only with Black 1 can Black capture the white stones regardless of circumstance.

Diagram 5, 6 Tiger's Mouth

The *Tiger's mouth* is another good shape. If you compare Black's situations in Dia. 5 and Dia. 6, you can see

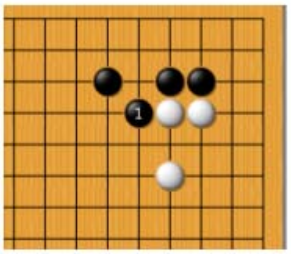

Diagram 5

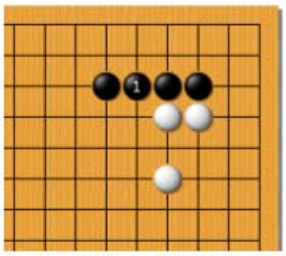

Diagram 6

that the tiger's mouth lets stones have more eye-shapes and is more constrictive to your opponent.

Thus, the tiger's mouth is good, and so is the point where your opponent can make it.

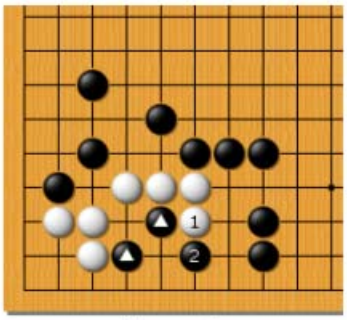

Diagram 7

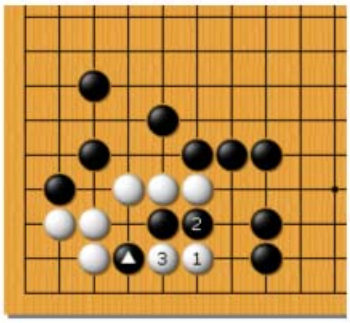

Diagram 8

Diagram 7, 8

The group of White in the left corner has only one eye so far, and it is unlikely for White to break through the Black's siege. The only hope White has is the fact that the two marked black stones are relatively weak. However, it makes the situation absolutely hopeless if White pushes down with 1 and makes Black answer with a tiger's mouth as in Dia. 7.

I hope no one who studies my lesson will play like this, without a plan. In this case, the point where Black can make a tiger's mouth is a vital point, namely White 1 in Dia. 8. Black has no choice but to push at 2, and then White

3 is a smart follow-up move. Black cannot connect the marked stone since it will cost him a bigger loss of four stones, and therefore White can live by capturing the marked stone.

Although this lesson was about ``vital point of shapes,'' it is usually true that a point good for the opponent is also good for you. In other words, it is not good to let your opponent make a good position. Try not to give your opponent a chance to play well, and soon you'll feel yourself much improved.

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Lesson 34: Vital Point of Shapes 3

Center of Symmetrical Shape

Once, at a Baduk tournament award ceremony a presenter stood, awkwardly, not knowing where to stand among the group of numerous awardees for a commemorative group photo. Then, one guy from the crowd shouted, ``The center is the vital point in a symmetrical position!'' Since that was a well-known Baduk proverb, everybody laughed and the presenter stood accordingly. I don't know how well the proverb works in a photo shoot, but it certainly works beautifully in baduk.

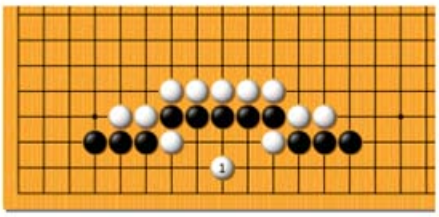

Diagram 1

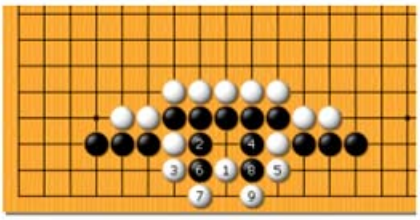

Diagram 2

Diagram 1

As the center point of three stones, the center of a symmetrical shape can be a vital point. The shape here is not very usual but dramatically illustrates how the center point can be good. Before White 1 was played, the bottom area seemed to be Black's territory, the two white stones being dead. But actually, the five black stones on the 4th line are dead by White's brilliant move.

Diagram 2

No matter how hard Black tries to save them, there is no way out, sinceWhite has occupied the vital point of symmetry.

Diagram 3

Because you've seen how to find the vital point of different shapes, it should be easy to choose the correct move for White in Dia. 3. Yes, the answer is ``B.''

Diagram 3

Diagram 4

Diagram 4

Black 2 and 4 just make things worse. The resulting shape up to 5 is also symmetrical and is nicknamed a ``crane's nest'' as 烏龜不出頭),'' meaning ``a black turtle that cannot push out its head'' describes the situation in which the stones cannot break through the blockade.

Diagram 5

To play at the symmetrical point is also useful to save your own stones. Black 1 here is the only way to save the black stones in the corner.

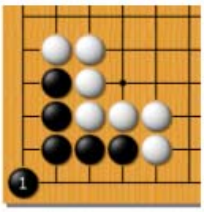

Diagram 5

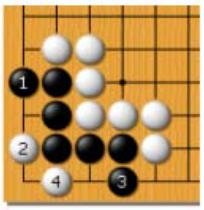

Diagram 6

Diagram 6

If Black descends at 1, White 2 will be a vital point. Up to 4, the corner situation is the famous "bent four in the corner," and as you may know, the Black's group is dead.

Diagram 7

It is good to play in the middle of the opponent's symmetrical position in the opening. Because there are two choices for White to extend, the white stone doesn't need to worry about Black's attack. If Black comes from the right side, White can extend at ``A'' and vice versa.

Diagram 8

The center point is also useful in the endgame. White 1 is a very smart move to save his stones

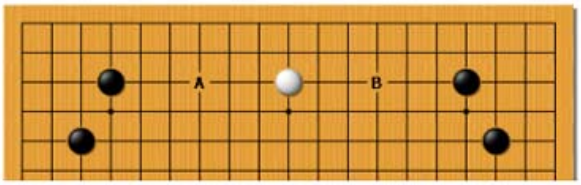

Diagram 7

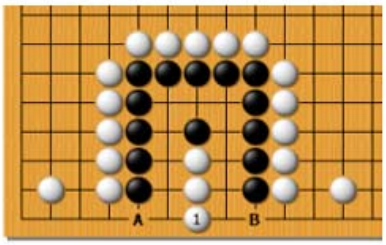

Diagram 8

imprisoned in Black's territory. Now, White can bridge his stones by either ``A'' or ``B.'' The moves introduced in Dia. 7 and Dia. 8

have a pair of ways to deal with the situation. This kind of move is called Matpogi in Korean, meaning ``to have a paired solution.'' In both examples above, the effects of the paired solutions are exactly the same, although usually they are not. They sometimes differ, such as killing the opponent's group vs.

 destroying the opponent's territory.

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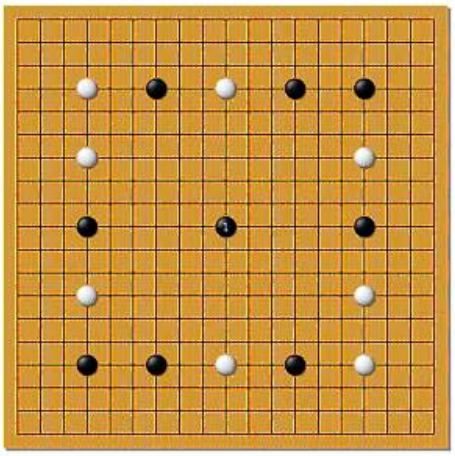
Lesson 35: Sunjang Baduk



Dia. 1

The oldest existing record of baduk -- a strategic two-player board game -- in Korea is the one from A.D. 475, the story about the famous monk-spy Torim of the Koguryo Kingdom and King Kaero (?- 475) of Paekche. There is no clear picture as to what kind of game the Buddhist monk played with the king, but from many clues, we can conjecture that baduk played in Korea at that time must have been somewhat different from what was played in ancient China.

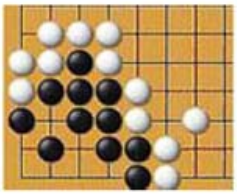
The ancient Chinese style of baduk started with the diagonal placement of two black stones and two white stones on the four star points in the corners. Since there is a high possibility that baduk was born in China and Korea learned the game from China, it is plausible that the Koreans also played with the old Chinese style at first. However, the Korean style of baduk changed and became different from the Chinese one. In short, Korean style baduk started with eight black stones and eight white stones placed on the 16 star points (actually flower points) and putting a black stone on the last star point in the center as shown in Dia. 1.

"sunjang baduk." There are many opinions about the meaning of the name, but the one explaining it as "deploying commanders" seems to be the most reasonable among them. The oldest surviving game record of sunjang baduk is from the 1880s, which is obviously not very old. However, evidence tells us that Sunjang has a very long history.

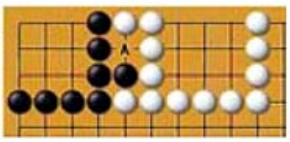
One such piece of evidence is the number of flower points on the board. As mentioned above, there are 17 flower points on the board of sunjang baduk, which distinguishes it from the modern board with nine star points. The oldest Sunjang board now in existence is the one in Shosoin of Japan. It is said to have been a present from Paekjae during the 7th century.

Another uniqueness of sunjang baduk is the counting method. Roughly speaking, there are two counting methods used at present, the Territory Rule counting the empty intersections surrounded by the same colored stones, and the Area Rule counting the number of stones living on the board. Sunjang counting can be categorized as the Territory Rule, since it counts the empty points surrounded by the player's own stones. But actually, the outcome of Sunjang counting differs much from that of the modern Territory Rule.

In Dia. 2, Black's territory in the corner is seven points when it is counted by the Territory Rule, but it is 10 points when counted by the Sunjang rule. This is because in sunjang baduk, stones are taken off the board except when they are needed to define the boundary as shown in Dia. 3, and the remaining intersections are counted. The stone at "A" in Dia. 4 cannot be taken off since White can capture a black stone by playing at A.

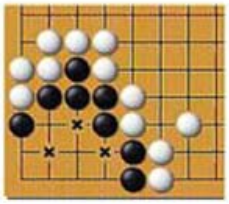


Dia. 2

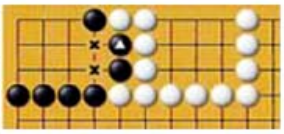


Dia. 5

Therefore, some intersections, which are worth nothing in the modern Territory Rule, can be worth a lot in Sunjang counting. For example, the move at "A" in Dia. 5, being a neutral point under the Territory Rule, can be worth up to four points because both players can add two more points to his territory by playing at this point as shown below.

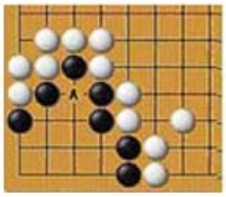


Dia. 3

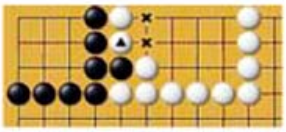


Dia. 6

Sunjang baduk was played among Koreans until the 1950s. There are about 45 game records now remaining, most of them from the 1930s. Since there are 17 stones positioned in advance, the playing style of sungjang baduk is quite different from the modern style, especially during the opening stage.



Dia. 4



Dia. 7

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Lesson 36: Star Point Patterns

Star point patterns are most commonly used because the star point, different from the 3-4 point that influences only one side it faces, affects both adjacent sides equally so as to be chosen in any circumstance.

Also, during the last 25 years, the value of the center has been discovered among top players, and the value of the star point has also risen accordingly. As the star point has been studied a great deal, more and more star point patterns were invented, and they became so numerous that it is now almost impossible to say that there are ``patterns.'' However, there are still basic patterns useful at the amateur level, so let's look at some of them.

Diagram 1

This pattern usually appears in handicap games. While Black secures territory in the corner, White can take the chance to play elsewhere after finishing this pattern. In other words, Black gets territory and White gains velocity. This kind of deal is enough for Black when he doesn't need to gain more than White, namely in handicap games. However, it will be a little bit defensive if it is an even game. For Black 8, it is possible to play ``A.''

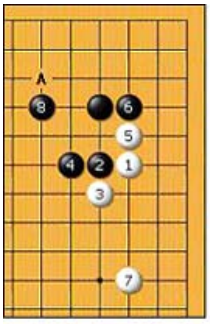

Diagram 1

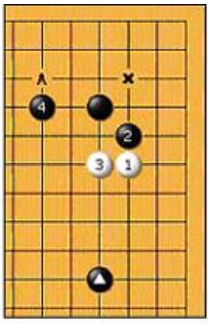

Diagram 2

Diagram 2

In General, to attach at 2 with a diagonal is not good. Although the corner seems to be Black's territory, actually it is not, because White can always enter the corner at 3-3 and easily live. But, if there is a black stone on the right side as here, Black 2 can be a good move. Now, White doesn't have enough space to extend, therefore Black can attack the two white stones. Black can also play at ``A'' instead of Black 4.

Diagram 3

This happens when Black pincers White's approaching move. If there are no Black stones on the upper side, then Black 2 should be played at 3 instead. This pattern was introduced in a previous lesson (lesson 25). With a △-marked stone as here, however, it is much better for Black to block from the upper side with 2. Up to 6, Black has built a large framework on the upper side confining White in the corner.

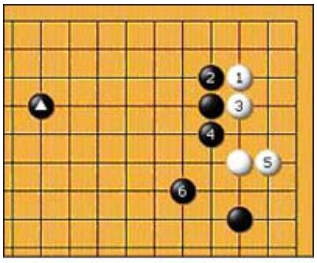

Diagram 3

Diagram 4

Being pincered, approaching once again is another possible choice for White, rather than coming into the corner. White can avoid being blocked from the outside and get the corner territory as well by the sacrifice of two stones on the right side, and Black can save a move here and play elsewhere.

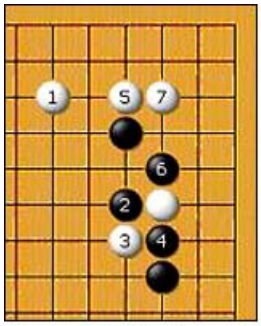

Diagram 4

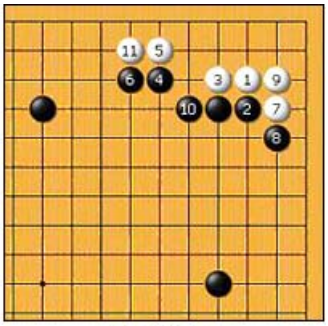

Diagram 5

Diagram 5

If it is not easy for White to approach from either side because of pre-positioned stones as here, it is possible for him to play just from the 3-3 point. Then Black should choose for Black 2, between two directions, where to block. Although there are many more variations apart from the one shown here, you can tell which one will bring the better result based on this example.

The patterns introduced here are just basics. But, even the basics tell us something important; the choice of patterns should be done based on the circumstances.

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Lesson 37: 3-4 Point Patterns Part 1

Among the numerous corner patterns existing, 3-4 point patterns take up the majority; there are several ways to approach and several ways to pincer. The patterns introduced here make up the bare minimum you should know in order to enjoy the game.

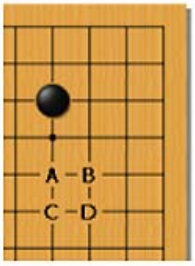

Diagram 1

Diagram 1: As mentioned before, there are four choices in approaching the 3-4 point. Among them, ``A'' and ``B'' are much more common than the other two. We've already seen the one with White ``A'' and Black attaching at ``B'' in the previous lesson, so let's start with White ``A'' and Black's two-space pincer.

Diagram 2: White 2 is a kind of sacrifice to make it easy for White to settle his position on the right side. Owing to it, White can force Black to answer with 5 to 9. Since Black needs to add a stone on the upper side with 13 in order to lock up White 2, White can play elsewhere.

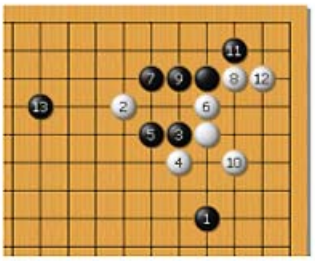
Diagram 2

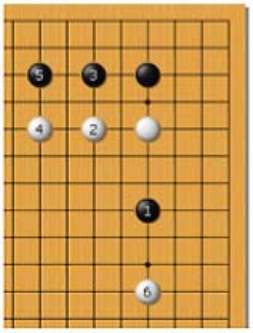
Diagram 3

Diagram 3: If the sequence shown in Dia. 2 looks too complicated, then White can just jump toward the center. After building influence up to 4, White attacks the black stone on the right side. Although the sequence up to 6 is quite simple, the fight following this would be very difficult for both players.

Diagram 4: When White plays the one-space high approach, Black can also attach from above as shown here. After playing up to 4, Black can choose between playing elsewhere and continuing to play in this corner. There are two choices for Black to develop this corner: influence and profit.

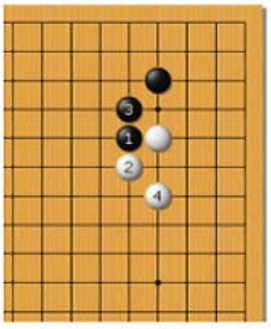
Diagram 4

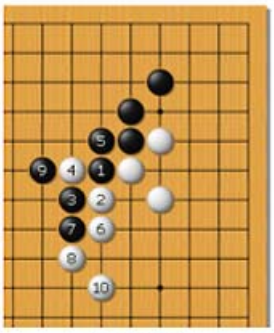
Diagram 5

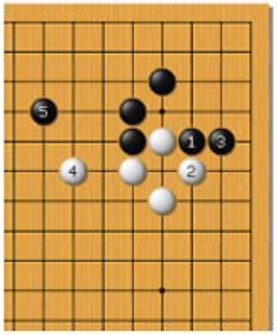
Diagram 6

Diagram 5: If Black wants to build influence, the two-step-bend with 1 and 3 is good. After White 10, Black can develop the upper side. But the result is satisfactory for White as well, since he can make the right side his territory.

Diagram 6: Black 1 and 3 are the usual moves when Black wants profit instead of influence. While Black gains territory on the upper side, White can develop the right side.

*** The Difference between the Two-Step-Bend and the Double-Bend**

The two-step-bend and the double-bend are Baduk terms that are occasionally confused. The usual mistake is to use ``double-bend'' instead of ``two-step-bend.''

The Korean words are '양젖힘' for double-bend and '이단젖힘' for two-step-bend, respectively. You've

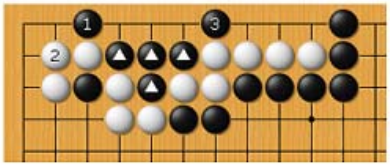

Diagram 7

already seen an example of the two-step-bend, the successive bends toward one direction, in Dia. 5. An example of the double-bend is shown in Dia. 7.

The double-bend is a technique to increase the number of liberties by bending twice to the left and to the right in a capturing race. Black 1 and 3 in Dia.7 is a model of the double-bend and

Black can win the capturing race. If Black bends just at 3 without playing 1, then White can bend at ``A' ' and the four marked black stones will be dead by the shortage of liberties.

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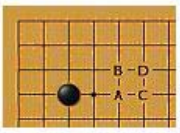
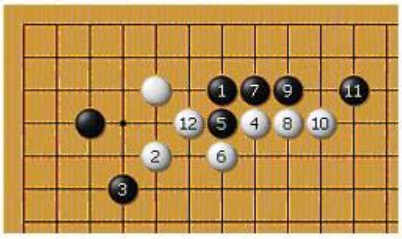
Lesson 38: 3-4 Point Patterns Part 2



Dia. 1

Diagram 1: In the last lesson, you learned the patterns that occur when White approaches from ``A.'' Today's lesson will cover the patterns that come about when you approach from ``B.''

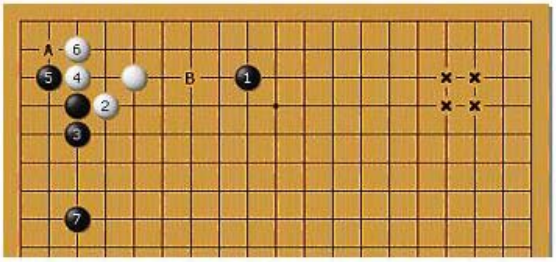
Diagram 2: This is a basic pattern that occurs when White approaches with a knight's move. The one with Black's two-space high pincer was introduced before, and this one is with a one-space low pincer at 1. Black keeps the corner with 3 by making White jump at 2, and also gets some territory on the upper side while White builds influence in the center.



Dia. 2

Since White doesn't have any territory assured for him in the pattern in Dia. 2,

beginners generally don't like to take White in this situation. It is natural for them to prefer having ready-made profit to building influence because they don't know how to materialize the influential value. Even for a professional, it is not easy to evaluate the profit a certain shape will bring in the future. I also have to confess that it is very hard to explain why the influence has the same value as a profit in hand, although I know that may sound quite irresponsible.

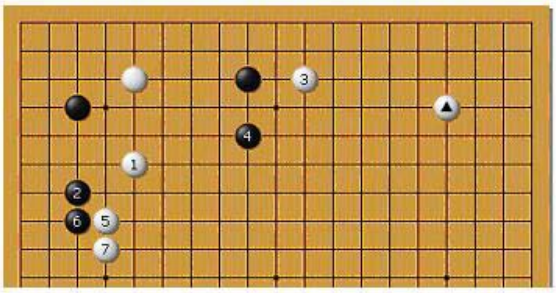


Dia. 3

When professionals face a situation that they may find a solution to, but find it difficult to explain in words why they choose the solution, they elude the situation by using the word ``intuition.'' They, including me, insist that they can tell the good and the bad through feeling. I suspect this happens because the professionals haven't been fully trained to express in words what they know. It is also probable for them to delude themselves that they know things through feeling, not through logic, since they learned this game when they were very young.

I would like to suggest that the intuition comes from the close study of established patterns and situations, and the corner patterns make up the biggest part of the study. The corner patterns are made by the strongest players in order to give equal outcome to both Black and White, and so you can use them without the worry of making mistakes. In other words, through learning corner patterns, you can experience many situations where both players can be equally satisfied. And, from this experience, you can build intuition about shapes, situations, good moves and bad moves.

That was a long sideline. Let's see another corner pattern starting with a three-space pincer.



Dia. 4

Diagram 3: This pattern is usually chosen when Black has a stone in the x-marked corner. White's group in the left corner is safe because it has two ways to make a base. If Black plays at ``A,'' then White will extend at ``B,'' and if Black plays at ``B,'' then White will turn at ``A.''

Diagram 4: If there is a white stone in the upper right corner as shown, then White will go out toward the center and threaten the life of the black stone on the upper side with 3 to 7. Even though the black stones on the upper side are not so much in danger, this result is not good for Black because White can take the initiative of the situation

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Lesson 39: 3-4 Points Patterns Part 3

The distant approaches, low (large knight's move) and high, are used when the player doesn't want an intimate fight. Let's start with the approach for the large knight's move.

Diagram 1: Black 2 is the simplest way to answer the large knight's move approach of White 1, keeping the corner in one move and saving a turn to play elsewhere. Instead of 3, White can also extend at ``A.''

Diagram 2: The one-space pincer with 2 is the more active way than the diagonal in Dia. 1.

White 3 and 5 are the most usual moves in this situation to settle his position in the corner by sacrificing White 1. Up to Black 16, Black builds an influence toward the center. If Black wants to strengthen the power toward the center than in the side, Black can connect at ``A'' instead of 16.

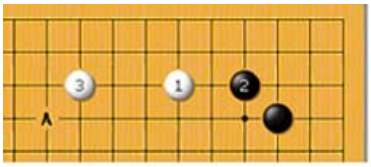

Diagram 1

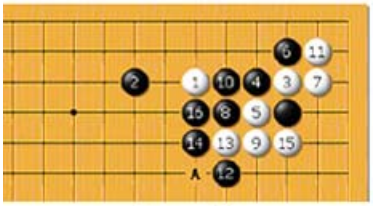

Diagram 2

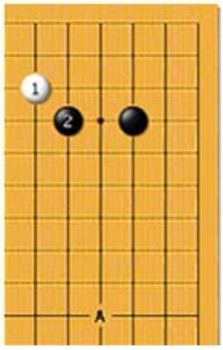

Diagram 3

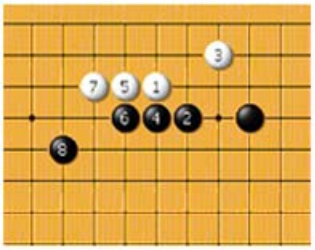

Diagram 4

Diagram 3: When there is an ally around ``A,'' the shoulder-hit with Black 2 is a good move to develop the right side.

Diagram 4: The easiest way for Black to enlarge its territorial framework on the right side is to push with 4 and 6 and jump at 8.

Diagram 5: The sequence can vary as shown here. White's position becomes stronger than the one in Dia. 4, but Black also gets the sonsu (*sente*) to play elsewhere in this variation.

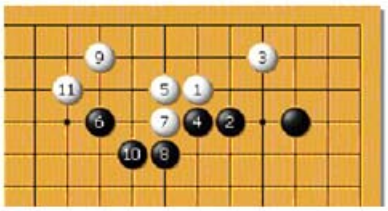

Diagram 5

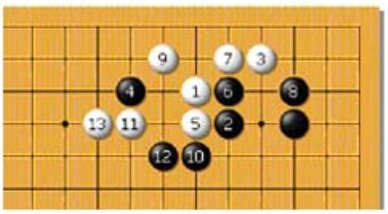

Diagram 6

Diagram 6: The pincer with 4 following Black 2 is the most popular move in this situation. It allows Black to keep the corner more certainly, and also to develop the side in sonsu. There are too many variations for every move after Black 4 to introduce them all. The one shown here is the most simple and peaceful variation of them.

Diagram 7: If you really don't want to give your opponent a chance to raise the tension of the game, the two-space high approach, White 1 here, is a good way to render the game to progress more slowly. Black 2 is also an easygoing move, not offending your opponent's intentions. Since most corner patterns are played during the opening, it is not bad to let your opponent do what he wants if you can keep the balance of the game. Besides, if there is not much decided during the opening, there should be more room for the

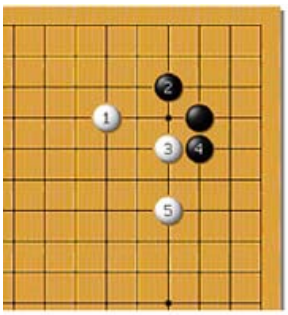

Diagram 7

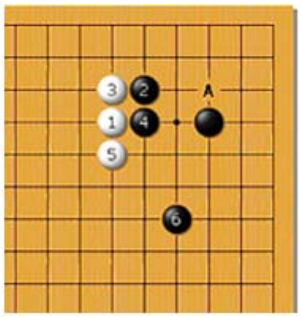

Diagram 8

players to do what they want during the middle game, which can be favorable for the player who is good at reading and fighting in the middle game. Against Black 2, White 3 and 5 are good moves, light and flexible.

Diagram 8: Black 2 and 4 are more direct in their purpose to keep the corner and the side as Black's territory. The problem is that there is a potential for White to invade the corner by attaching at 'A,' and so it is difficult to consider the corner as Black's assured territory. Since Black makes White build a wall of three stones, now White can develop the upper side.

From the last two examples, you may notice that in corner patterns, the more you gain, the more the opponent gets as well. That is because the patterns are made to be impartial to both players.

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Lesson 40: 4-5 and 3-5 Points Patterns

It is not very usual for beginners to intentionally play 4-5 point and 3-5 point. However, if you ignore the opponent's approach when you occupy a corner with a stone at 3-4 point, then your position can change into 4-5 or 3-5 point situation. For example, if you don't answer the opponent's knight's approach and play elsewhere, the situation will become as you approach the opponent's corner occupied by a stone at 3-5 point. Therefore, it will be helpful to know some 4-5 and 3-5 point patterns starting with an approach at 3-4 point.

Diagram 1: The simplest way to deal with the opponent's approach is to attach at 2. You may remember seeing this pattern when you learned 3-4 point patterns. At that time, Black approached with a one-space jump and White answered with 7, and then from Black 2 to 6. The only difference is that Black can get the next turn in the sequence shown here. Black 6 also can be at ``A.''

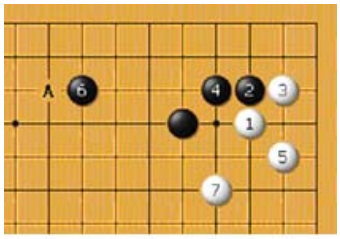

Diagram 1

Diagram 2: Black also can attach from outside with 2. After White 5, there are two choices for Black to cut, 'A' and 'B.'

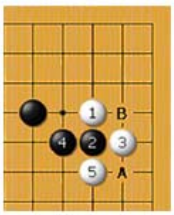

Diagram 2

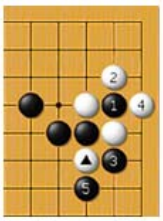

Diagram 3

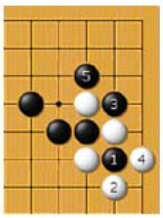

Diagram 4

Diagram 3: If the ladder made by Black 3 and 5 is favorable to Black, he can cut at 1. As the proverb ``capture the cutting stone'' goes, White should capture Black 1 with 2 and 4, while Black captures the marked white stone by a ladder. If White connected at 3 instead of giving atari with 2, then Black would have captured the white stone in the corner and the result would be far better for Black than the one in Dia. 4.

Diagram 4: If the ladder is not favorable to Black, Black should cut at 1 as shown here and capture the white stone in the corner. If White connected at 3 instead of capturing the cutting stone, then Black will extend at 2 and fight with the white stones in the corner.

Diagram 5, 6: These two diagrams show a corner pattern in a corner kept by a stone at a 3-5 point. Although the sequence looks quite complicated, the theme is simple; Black is building a wall to the upper side and White is making and defending the territory on the right side. I hope that it would not be very difficult to understand the moves up to White 13 in Dia. 5. Black 14 has a knack to make Black able to play Black 1 in Dia. 6 in sonsu. Now, White cannot help but to connect at 15 even though the proverb ``capture the cutting stone'' says another thing because if White captures Black 14 with ``A,'' then Black will play double-atari by giving an atari at ``B'' and cutting at 15. It is good to learn the Black's sequential technique; cutting 14 first without playing ``B.'' It is not for trapping White but for leaving the chance to play 3 in Dia. 6 instead of ``B.'' Owing to this, Black can hit the two white stones' head with 7 and make a good shape with 9.

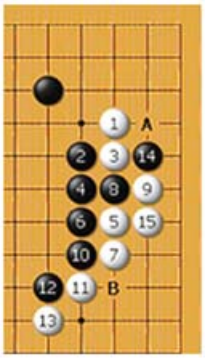

Diagram 5

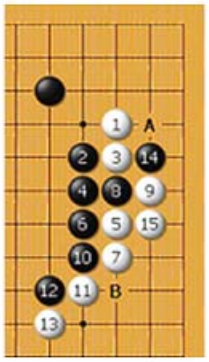

Diagram 6

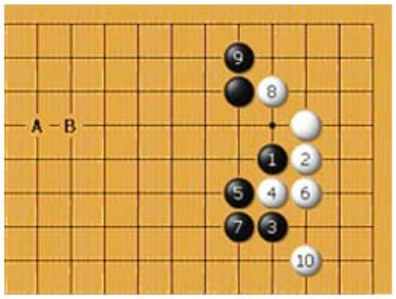

Diagram 7

Diagram 7: If the sequence shown above is still difficult for you to play, this one can be another choice. After White 10, Black will extend at ``A'' or ``B.''

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Lesson 41: Bent Four in the Corner

When you learned about the Life and Death of stones, you were told that the bent-four eye space is alive. As in Dia. 1, if White plays one of the x-marked points, Black can live by playing the other one.

However, different from a bent-four in a normal position, the one in the corner is not perfectly alive.

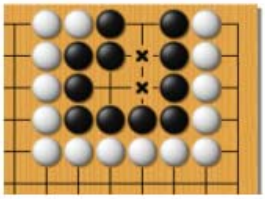

Diagram 1

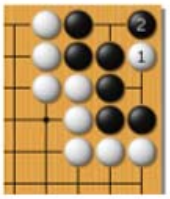

Diagram 2

Diagram 2: The black group in the corner has a bent-four eye space, but it is not alive yet. If White plays at 1, the only way Black can save the group is to make a ko with 2. In short, when your group has a bent-four eye space, you should add a move there to make sure of the life of your group.

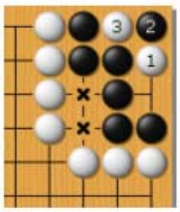

Diagram 3

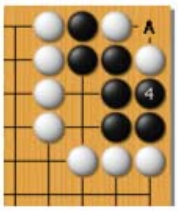

Diagram 4

Diagram 3, 4: When there are two or more liberties as here, however, the bent-four is safe. After White takes the ko with 3 in Dia. 3, Black can play atari with 4 as in Dia. 4 since he still has liberties. Now, because White cannot play at ``A,'' the illegal point, Black can live without a ko.

So far, the handling of bent-four in the corner is easy to understand. But, there remains a very difficult problem.

Diagram 5: The White's eye space is not bent-four, but actually bent-five; so, is it alive? In this situation, White cannot play either of the two x-marked points, because then the eye space will become a bent-three by Black's connecting at ``A'' and the White's group will be dead. Therefore, White cannot play any more moves inside the eye space at all, except when there is a need to kill himself intentionally.

Diagram 6: On the other hand, Black can play additional moves here and change the situation. Suppose that Black plays all the x-marked moves; the White's eye space will become the bent-four in the corner.

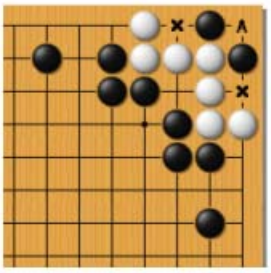

Diagram 5

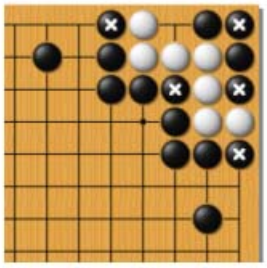

Diagram 6

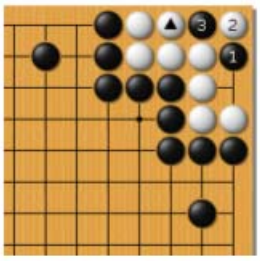

Diagram 7

Diagram 7: Now, if White takes off the four black stones in the corner, Black will play 1 and start a ko.

The key question about the situation shown in Dia. 5 is what happens if Black doesn't play the moves necessary to make a ko until the game is almost over? Since White cannot do anything to improve the situation, the right to decide the situation belongs only to Black. Therefore, Black can put off the decision until the last moment when there is no gainful move except the points involved with the situation, or even until the last neutral point is played out. Then what happens?

For this kind situation, the Korean and Japanese Baduk rules prescribe that ``when only one player can make a ko and the other player can do nothing but kill himself, the group of the latter is considered to be dead without further play.'' This means that the white group in Dia. 5 is dead as it is even if Black doesn't add moves in order to actually kill it. Of course, if the black stones seizing the white group happen to be in danger of being killed, namely the black and the white stones in Dia. 5 fighting a capturing race, then Black should also play the corner out and prove that the white stones are dead for real.

The judgment for the white group may seem to be too ruthless and beginners often argue about the situation. If you want to argue with me, for the present, I can only say that this is the rule. For further explanation, please wait for the next lesson.

* Please check that the groups of Black in Dia. 8 are also dead as they are without White's further moves.

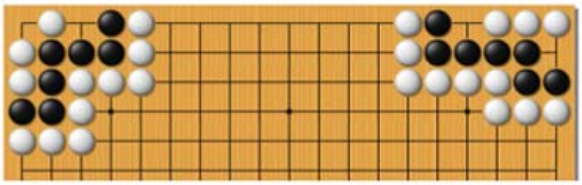

Diagram 8

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Lesson 42: The Differences of Rules

Although there are several sets of rules that exist and are used throughout the world, all the rules are basically the same. The only significantly different part is the way of counting territory when the game ends. Moreover, in spite of the difference in the way of counting, the scores calculated by the different rule sets are usually the same, so you may not be able to tell which rule was applied.

Among the rules, the two most commonly used are the Chinese rule and the Japanese rule. The Japanese counting rule takes into account the number of empty intersections surrounded by the same colored stones and the number of captured or removed stones; in contrast, the Chinese rule counts the former plus the number of living stones remaining on the board. Let's see the examples.

Diagram 1: When a game is over, according to the Japanese counting rule, the players should take the opponents' stones left dead in their own territory, the marked stones here, and fill the opponents' territory.

Diagram 1

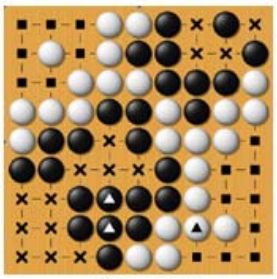

Diagram 2

Diagram 2: Then, players count the number of empty points surrounded by the stones. Here, Black owns 15 x-marked points while White has 16 ``■'' -marked points, and so Black wins by one point. (In a real game, players move the stones to make the shapes of territory easier to count.)

Diagram 3: However, in the Chinese counting rule, players don't take the dead stones (the ``▲'' -marked stones in Dia. 1) into account. They just count the territory of one side, for example,

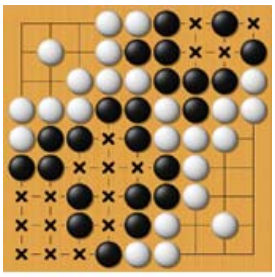

Diagram 3

the number of empty points in Black's territory, 17 points here.

Diagram 4: To count one side's total points, you add his number of empty points to the number of his stones left alive on the board. Since 23 black stones are on the board in this game (in a real game, players destroy the shapes of stones in order to make them easier to count), the sum of these two numbers is 40.

And then, to tell the winner, players compare the sum with half the total number of intersections on the board. Half of the total number of intersections on the board is 40.5 (9x9/2) and the sum of Black's points and stones on the board is 40, so in the comparison of these two numbers, Black loses the game by half a point. If you count White's side, you will see that the sum of White's intersections and stones is 41. The difference between Black and White is one point and this result is the same as the result we get with the Japanese rule.

The Chinese counting method may look very complicated, but it gives clearer explanations than the Japanese counting method to certain situations, the ``bent four in the corner,'' which we have seen in the last lesson, being a good example.

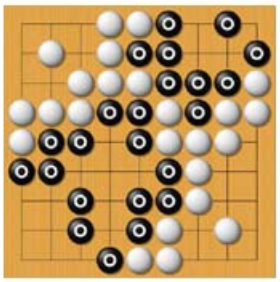

Diagram 4

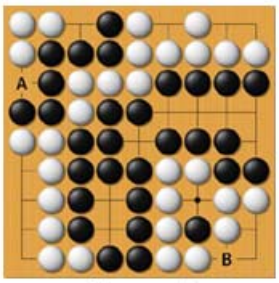

Diagram 5

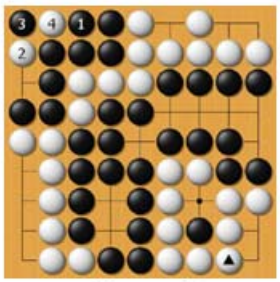

Diagram 6

Diagram 5: As you know, Black's ``bent four'' in the upper left corner is considered dead in the Japanese rule, but White cannot prove the group's death in actual play. However, it is possible to prove it under the Chinese counting method. Since both the intersections and the stones are taken into account in the Chinese counting, it is not a loss of point that you put your stones inside your territory. Therefore, White can remove the possible ko threat of Black at ``B'' before starting a ko with ``A'' without any loss.

Diagram 6: Owing to White ``▲,'' now Black has no ko threat and cannot help but let the group die. As mentioned above, usually the results figured out by different rules are the same because what the Chinese rule solves through actual play is solved in the same way through a regulation in the Japanese rule.

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Lesson 43: Big Eye vs. Small Eye

``Big eye vs. small eye'' is a Baduk proverb that says, in a capturing race between two one-eyed groups with eye spaces of different size, the group with the bigger eye space wins the race.

Diagram 1: In a capturing race, the group with more liberties than the other usually wins the race. However, as you may remember, if one group has an eye while the other doesn't, the one with an eye can win even if the other has more liberties. Therefore, the ``▲'' -marked white stones, having 4 liberties, cannot capture the group of five black stones that has an eye.

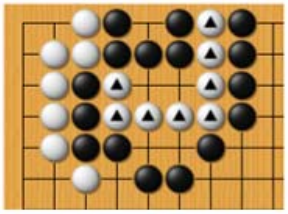

Diagram 1

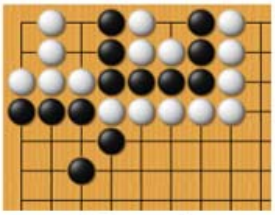

Diagram 2

Diagram 2: Even when two one-eyed groups are in a capturing race, the principle that the one having more liberties wins the race doesn't change. However, if the groups in the capturing race share liberties and the sizes of the eyes of the groups differ, the one who has the bigger eye wins the capturing race. Here, White has an eye with two spaces and four liberties while Black has an eye with four spaces and three liberties, but White cannot kill the black group even if he is allowed to have several consecutive turns.

Diagram 3: Even if White can play the ``▲'' -marked stones consecutively, after Black takes the three white stones off with 1, Black has three liberties while White has just two. So Black can kill the white group with 3.

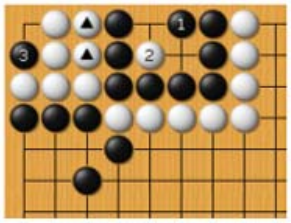

Diagram 3

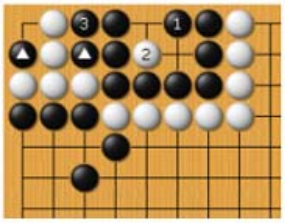

Diagram 4

Diagram 4: On the contrary, Black can capture the white group by playing the ``△'' -marked points, and then taking off the three white stones with 1. Although White plays a move before Black plays both ``△'' -marked points, the result is the same.

Diagram 5: The same thing happens in the situation in this diagram. White has a 4-space eye while Black has a 5-space eye, so White cannot capture the Black group even if allowed several turns in a row. I will leave the verification to the readers.

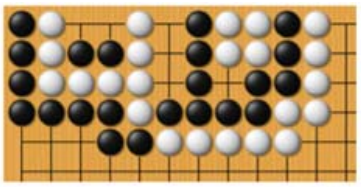

Diagram 5

Therefore, if a ``big eye vs. small eye'' situation happens, the one with the bigger eye will capture the other without playing any additional moves. According to Japanese and Korean rules, filling your own territory is a loss of points, and the player with the bigger eye doesn't need to play any more moves to prove that he can kill the other. For example, in Dia.5,

Black can take off the white stones in the upper left corner without playing any additional moves when the game is over.

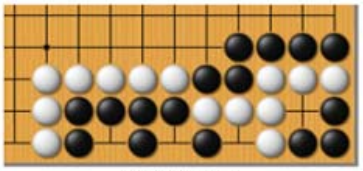

Diagram 6

Diagram 6: However, if there is a ko related to the ``big eye vs. small eye,'' the situation becomes rather difficult to solve. As in the normal ``big eye vs. small eye'' situation, the one with smaller eye, Black in this diagram, cannot do anything. However, the one with bigger eye, White here, also cannot avoid a ko in order to kill the black group. Of course White can postpone starting the ko until the end of the game. Then what happens?

Under the Japanese and Korean rules, the situation is decided in the same way as the ``bent four in the corner,'' so that the one with bigger eye captures the other without additional moves. Whereas, in the Chinese rules, White can remove all the possible ko threats of Black and then play out the ko since the moves filling his own territory are not losses in the Chinese system.

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Lesson 44: Professionals' Habits

Many amateur players exhibit bad habits during their game. They make jokes, jingle the stones in their hands or in the bowls or shake their legs among other things. They rationalize their actions by saying they cannot think of good moves if they stop doing these things. Obviously this cannot be an excuse because amateurs should play Baduk not only to win, but to cultivate their minds. Also, there should be better ways to develop their skills than continuing such bad habits.

Cho Chi-hoon

Cho Hoon-hyun

Lee Chang-ho

However, some top professionals also have these kinds of habits. Their habits are more sophisticated and sometimes more bizarre.

Cho Chi-hoon, 9 dan, is famous for breaking matchsticks during a game. He also plucks his hair when he is in deep thought, regardless of the situation of a game. After his game, there usually remains a heap of broken matchsticks, and his hair, neat before the game, becomes a real mess.

Cho Hoon-hyun 9 dan's habit is to murmur in Japanese. He has been living in Japan for about 10 years, and he speaks Japanese fluently. Although his mumblings are usually rebukes to himself, this, in fact means he is in a good mood. Because he mumbles in Japanese, it normally doesn't bother Korean players, but when he plays against Japanese players, it can be a serious source of irritation. Years ago, when Cho played with Yoda, the Japanese 9 dan, Yoda wore earplugs in order not to hear Cho's murmuring.

Lee Chang-ho 9 dans goes to the toilet to wash his face several times during a game, even if there is a wet towel prepared for him on the game table. Since he goes there usually when he thinks a certain situation is settled favorably for him, observers can receive a hint about the state of the game.

Seo Neung-wook 9 dan, who is notorious for his fast play, uses a rosary to slow down his playing speed. According to him, it was very effective at first, but now he has gotten used to it and can play as fast as ever.

Many Chinese players bring a peppermint-flavored ointment with them. This functions as a stimulant when they are tired of deep reading, endless fighting, or a long lasting game. We call the ointment "tiger salve" because there is a picture of a tiger on the lid. It would be fun to look for this tiger salve in a Chinese player's game.

Above all, the most popular prop used by professionals is a folding fan. Usually, players don't use the fan in its natural usage, but as a stick to hit their palm or head, or as an instrument to make a sound by folding the last fold. If you check a fan used by a Baduk player, you will find that only the edge is worn out.

These professionals' habits are all for improving their concentration. Because the professionals are also human beings, it is not easy for them to have full concentration from the beginning to the end of a game. Often a professionals' game lasts several hours, and sometimes overnight, so they try their best not to lose their attention. Their habits are not just for diversion, but are also an expression of their painful struggle.

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Lesson 45: Strange Things Happen in the Corner

The corner has some peculiarities so that more often than not, the normal principles of shapes and moves work a little differently there. For example, the rectangle six, absolutely viable in the center and on the side, can be killed if it is located in a corner as in Dia.1, because Black cannot play at 'A' after White 3 the black group in the corner is dead.

Diagram 2: If you have 8 points in your territory, usually there is no reason to worry about being killed, nor losing your territory. However, when there is a rectangle eight in a corner as here, then the opponent can change the 8 points into nothing by making a dual-life of it.

Diagram 1

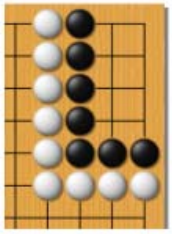
Diagram 2

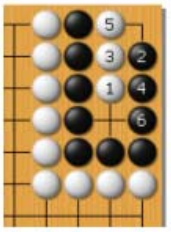
Diagram 3

Diagram 3: White 1 is the key point in turning the situation into a dual-life. Black 2, 4 and 6 are the best Black can do, and the situation turns out into a dual-life. If Black plays at 3 instead of 2, then the situation will become a ko by White's bend at 2, and this will be usually worse than a dual-life for Black.

Black's shape in Dia.2 is called a 'fool's eight' in Japan since Black can't save anything out of the 8 points he built up before.

Diagram 4: The shape of White in this diagram looks invulnerable to attack, already having two separate eyes. However, by using the special properties of a corner, this shape can also be killed.

Diagram 5: Black 1 is the vital point of White's shape. Because it is impossible for White to play at the 1-1 point, he should connect at 2 in order to prevent Black from making a snapback with 2.

Black 3 is a good move pressing White to reduce its own liberty with 4 by threatening White's eye at the ▲-marked point. Black 5 is the last hit to start a ko. If White plays at 1-1 with 4, Black can still make a ko by playing at 4.

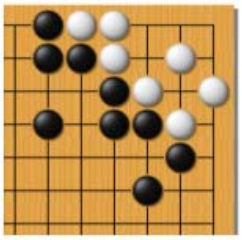
Diagram 4

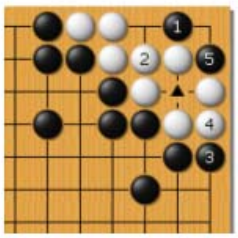
Diagram 5

Diagram 6: This one is the well-known shape called 'three moves in the corner.' The two △-marked black stones are surrounded by White and have only three liberties.

Meanwhile, the group of white stones in the corner looks like it has at least three liberties, because it has captured the x-marked black stone. However, if this is Black's turn, Black can kill the white group.

Diagram 7: In this case, descending at 1 to increase the number of captives is a good move. With this sacrifice, Black can lessen the number of liberties of the white group. The sequence up to White 4 is inevitable.

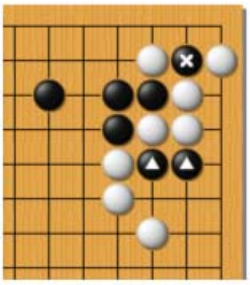
Diagram 6

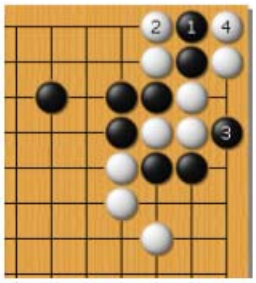
Diagram 7

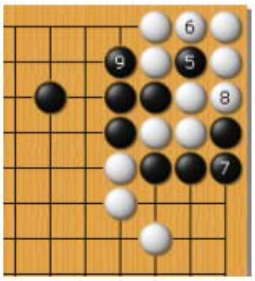
Diagram 8

Diagram 8: Another sacrifice at 5 is a key point and White cannot help but take off the stone. Then, as Black 3 in Dia.4, Black threatens White's eye with 7 and makes White erase his own liberty with 8. If White plays elsewhere than 8, Black can kill the white group by making atari at 8. Now, the numbers of liberties both players have has become the same, and Black can win the capture race since it is Black's turn.

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Lesson 46: Ten Golden Maxim of Baduk Part 1

The 10 rules introduced here have been known for much more than a thousand years from the Tang Dynasty of China. There are various versions of the rules in which the order of characters differs but the messages delivered by the rules are always the same. For sure you can be at least one stone stronger when you keep all these rules in mind and practice them in a game.

1. Greed for the Win Takes the Win Away

This is not advice on the techniques of Baduk but a warning about your mental attitude. Since Baduk is also a game, it is necessary to have confidence that you can win. But, if you only concentrate on winning, ironically, you must be afraid to lose and thus spoil your game. You can easily lose a game in which you were far ahead because you played defensively after sensing that you were winning. It happens also in professionals' games. In 7-round title matches, there were several players who lost because of losing four straight games after winning three straight games. That happens owing to the burden that the player winning three games feels about the result of the entire match. While you're picturing the trophy you'll receive, the game itself sneaks away from your grasp.

2. Be Unhurried to Enter Opponent's Territory

When the opening stage is finished and the territorial frameworks of both sides are decided, you should choose between invading your opponent's territory and defending your own. This maxim advises one not to hurry to invade opponent's turf. To practice this maxim, it is necessary to be able to exercise right judgment about the whole board situation. For example, if you know that you're leading then you choose a peaceful solution rather than the aggressive one. However, it is difficult to know exactly when to advance and when to retreat even for the top players.

3. Taking Care of Oneself When Attacking Others

It would be a great failure if you put your own group in danger while attacking the enemy. Therefore, when you're attacking your opponent's group, you should pay attention so as not to be counterattacked by your opponent. Also, if you're not sure you're stronger than the enemy, it is better not to start an attack at all.

4. Sacrifice for a Sunsoo

There is another proverb. It says that the weak cherish stones while the strong throw them away. It is not the goal of Baduk to save all the friendly stones but to acquire more territory than your opponent. This maxim tells us the significance of the turn in which you can play a move more important than the stones you may give up. It requires the ability to distinguish the key stones from the useless ones. However big a group of stones is, it is dispensable when the use of the stones is exhausted. However, even one stone can have an enormous value when its role is important in separating your opponent's groups or saving the friendly stones.

5. Abandon Small to Save Big

It sounds so natural but to practice this maxim is not that simple. When you are absorbed in a game, you can easily lose your calm and stick to the profit at hand and fail to see the bigger profit waiting in the future. In Baduk, as in life, it needs a great prudence to give up the small in front of you to obtain the uncertain big.

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Lesson 47: Ten Golden Maxim of Baduk Part 2

In this lesson, we will learn the maxim 6 to 10, which continues from last week.

6. When in Danger, Sacrifice (逢危須棄)

It would be best if you could manage to not put any group of stones in danger. Usually, however, there are one or more unsettled groups from each side during a game. When you have a weak group, then it is not always best to save the group no matter what happens. If you already have a strong group, you should carefully consider whether the weak group is worthy to save or not. If the risk of saving the group is higher than the value of the group itself, then you should find the way to give up the group and minimize the loss.

7. Make a Play with Prudence (愼勿輕速)

This warns of the moves played without consideration. People mindlessly follow the sequences they have memorized and don't doubt what books say. However, sequences of patterns should be changed according to the real situations and what books say cannot always be correct.

In Baduk, as in everything, you get as much as you put in. If you choose a move randomly, you cannot learn anything from the move and you will make the same mistake again. You would bore your opponent if you spent too much time thinking and he or she would not like to play with you. On the other hand, if you spend no time to think things trough, eventually you will be bored by your own game.

8. A Move Must Respond to the Others (動須相應)

No move on a board is independent from other moves. Your moves should be played in the connection with the situation and the stones played before. This is true not only between the same colored stones but also between enemies. If the opponent advances, you also advance, and if he stops, you stop. It is important to know what the opponent wants and tries to do and to respond to it. The location of set stones does not change, but the role of the stones changes every minute. So we say that Baduk is like an organism.

9. Against Strong Positions, Play Safely (彼强自保)

When your opponent is stronger than you, it is better not to start a fight. You cannot break a rock with eggs. The weakness you have must be caused by your mistakes, but the opponent will also make mistakes being a human. So, it is wise not to hurry in bad situation and to wait for the real chance to turn the table.

10. Make a Peace Move in Disadvantage (勢孤取和)

This maxim tells a group of stones that are isolated in a zone under the influence of the opponent, to try to settle down as soon as possible. Although a person has many brilliant plans for the future, it is useless if the person dies before he can set about the plans. It is not a humiliation to pursue living in an unfavorable situation. As much as you are at a disadvantage in that area, you should be at an advantage in another area, since Baduk is a game in which players make moves in turn. The real courage is to suffer the adversity of a moment and to wait for the final goal manifest.

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Lesson 48: Endgame Techniques Part 1

People usually think the endgame is a phase where they cannot make a significant change. It is true it is not as exciting as the other stages, such as the opening or the middle game. However, the endgame doesn't have to be just a boring routine. More often than not, you see more than 20 points change hands during an endgame. You could even say a big lead during the opening or the middle game is useless unless you play the endgame correctly.

There are formulized sequences in the endgame as well as in the opening, requiring as much reading and fighting skills as in the middle game. The ability to calculate exactly how many points the moves are worth is also necessary. Let's look at the moves.

1. Gote Endgame

Gote is a move which does not require your opponent to answer. It can also mean a position in which you are forced to answer the opponent's last move. In other words, a gote endgame means that the player who starts the sequence has the final move. A gote endgame's value is equal to the points that the endgame move gains or destroys.

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 Black 1 is a gote endgame worth one point. It gains one point at x but does not force White to answer. If White plays at 1, it will also be a one-point gote endgame.

2. Sente (Sunsoo) Endgame

This is the opposite of a gote endgame. You can play a sente endgame and also retain your turn to play elsewhere.

Diagram 2 If there is no black stone on the ▲-marked point, the black group in the corner is not completely alive. White 1 is a sente endgame because Black has to answer by playing at the point.

Diagram 3 The actual value of White 1 is two points. It is obvious that there is a two-point difference between Black's points in Dia.3 which is two, and Dia.4 which is four. However, the value of a sente endgame is worth more than the actual value since a player playing the sente endgame still has the opportunity to play another endgame.

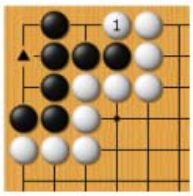

Diagram 2

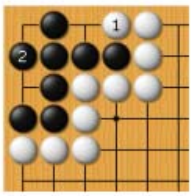

Diagram 3

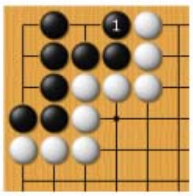

Diagram 4

3. Reverse Sente Endgame

This endgame prevents the opponent from playing a sente endgame, but ends with the player's gote. Because White 1 in Dia.2 is a sente endgame, Black 1 in Dia.4 becomes a reverse sente endgame. It is not as valuable as the sente endgame but much more valuable than the plain gote endgame.

4. Bilateral Sente Endgame

Bilateral sente endgame is a sente endgame for both players. Playing a bilateral sente endgame is important, because you can play your sente endgame as well as take away your opponent's chance to play his sente endgame. There is even the saying, 'give up the game if your opponent gets the chance to play a bilateral sente endgame.'

Diagram 5: Black 1 is a sente endgame. If White doesn't answer, Black's follow-up move at the ▲-marked point will cause huge damage to White's territory. White's playing at 1 is also a sente endgame since Black should answer in order not to lose his territory in the corner. Therefore, playing at 1 is a bilateral sente endgame.

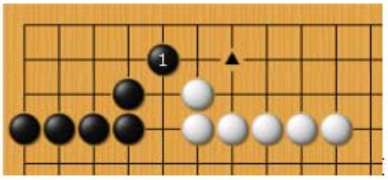

Diagram 5

You can use the term 'bilateral gote endgame' to refer to an endgame such as Black 1 in Dia.1.

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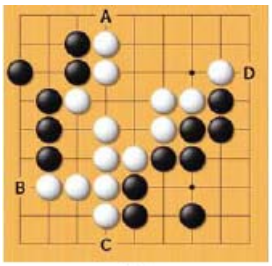
Lesson 49: Endgame Techniques Part 2

All's well that ends well. Even if you made many mistakes during the opening and the middle game, you can win the match with the help of a good endgame, and that is enough.

In Baduk, the half point advantage you have at the end matters more than the 30 points you lead while the game is underway. If you want to be really strong, you need to know how to get the most desirable result in the endgame. Let's start answering the following questions.

Diagram 1: It's Black's turn. What would be the right order for Black to play the endgame from A to D?



Dia.1

Diagram 2: Let's assume that Black plays from C. The sequence shown in this diagram is one of the worst outcomes Black can get. Here, White gains 20 points while Black gets 18, so that White wins by 2 points.

Diagram 3: However, if Black plays in the correct sequence, the result can be totally different. Here, "A" is Black's first move. Now the final score is Black's 20 points vs. White's 13 points (because White will take the ko in the upper right corner with "▲" and win the ko to get one more point) so that Black wins by 7 points! Isn't it amazing that the endgame sequence can make such a huge difference even on just a 9x9 board?

If it were a 19x19 board, the difference would have been even bigger. Nevertheless, you don't need to be afraid of playing the endgame moves.

In the endgame, there is no prescribed move you should memorize as in chosegi. The correct moves in the endgame are to be decided according the actual situation on the board, and the most important virtue you should have is caution. Let's review the question of Dia.1.

Dia.2

It is obvious that "A" is a bilateral sente endgame by the fact that White in Dia.2 and Black 1 in Dia.3 are both sentes. A bilateral sente endgame is worth twice as much as a unilateral sente endgame, since playing it in sente means also preventing the opponent from playing a sente endgame. It should therefore be played first.

You may think that it is possible to play a bilateral sente endgame after playing all the ordinary sente endgame moves. Surely it is correct if you can keep the sente through the process. However, it is not plausible to play "B" and "D" first and then "A" in Dia.1 because White can play "A" before replying to "B" or "D." It would be a big loss for Black to ignore White "A" since the life of the black group in that corner is in danger.

Thus, "sente" is a relative concept. If there is something more valuable, you cannot force your opponent to answer your move. This is why Black plays "D" first and then "B." Both are sente endgame moves, but "D" is worth more than "B."

Dia.3

"C" is the last choice because it is a (bilateral) gote endgame move. In Dia.3, Black chooses 11 rather than bending at 14. These two are both gote endgame moves, but Black 11 is three points while White 12 is two points.

If this sounds too complicated for the present, just put it off until the next lesson where "the exact value of the endgame move" is the topic.

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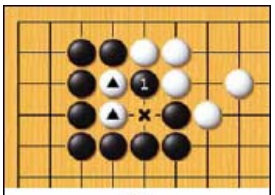
Lesson 50: Endgame Techniques Part 3

To find the most appropriate sequence of endgame moves in a game, you need to weigh the values of several endgame moves. But how?

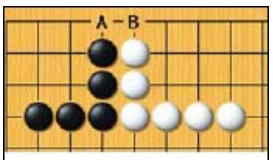


Dia.1

Diagram 1: You already know how to calculate the points gained by a move. Guess how many points Black 1 gains here.

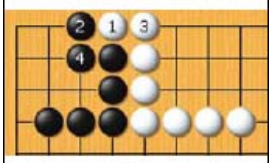
The answer is 5 points. Black gets 1 point at the x-marked point and two points for each ▲-marked white stone.

Diagram 2-4: To calculate the value of an endgame is also not difficult. The only noticeable distinction from the normal calculation is that you should count not just the change of points when one side plays the endgame, but the difference between the two expected outcomes when White plays the endgame and when Black does.



Dia.2

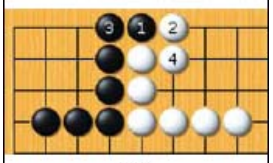
For example, the value of the endgame of White A or Black B in Dia.2 is 4 points because the two points Black loses in Dia.3 and the two points White loses in Dia.4 should be counted at the same time.



Dia.3

If this explanation sounds somewhat complicated, just remember that all kinds of counting should be considered from the viewpoints of both sides. Let's go back to Dia.1.

In this situation, I counted only the outcome which Black's move brought. But, even if the outcome of White's move is considered, the result is the same as 5 points because White would not add any points to his score by playing at 1.

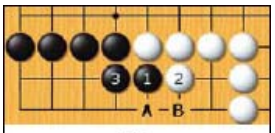


Dia.4

Diagram 5-7: Now, try to figure out how many points Black 1 and 3 will be.

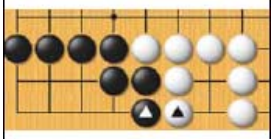
The first step is to count the territory after Black plays 1 and 3. Since the first line is not decided yet and the chance for a player to play A or B is the same for both (since it is a gote endgame move for both), assume that the territory is shaped as in Dia.6. The score is 7 to 2.

The next step is to imagine that White bends at 1 as in Dia.7. Here Black gets only 4 points while White gets 5.



Dia.5

Then, compare the difference of points between the outcome of Dia.5 in which Black gets three more points than in Dia.7 and the outcome of Dia.7 where White gets three more points than in Dia.5. Now you know the value of Black 1 and 3 in Dia.5, which is 6 points.


Dia.6

Because Black 1 in Dia.4 is 4 points and the other Black 1 in Dia.5 is 6 points, should Black play the latter move first? Of course not. The former is as you know a sente endgame while the latter is a gote.

Theoretically, you can play another 4-point endgame after playing Black 1 in Dia.4, which means you can get 8 points, two more points than the other, by playing it. Therefore, in general, the value of a sente endgame is usually counted as double the points it actually gets.

Dia.7

Even if you understood everything said above about figuring out endgame values, it is likely that you will be bored by the actual calculations.

However, I can guarantee you will be compensated by winning many matches owing to your smart endgame.

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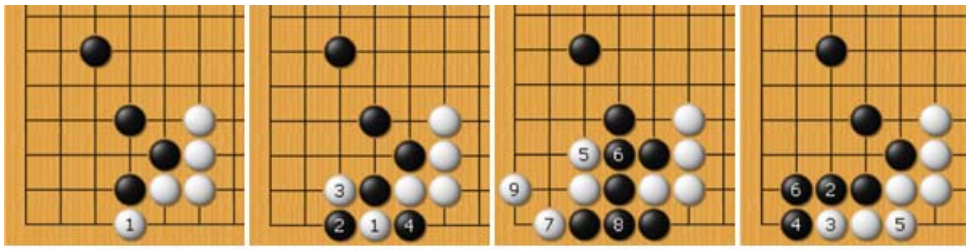
Lesson 51: Endgame Techniques Part 4

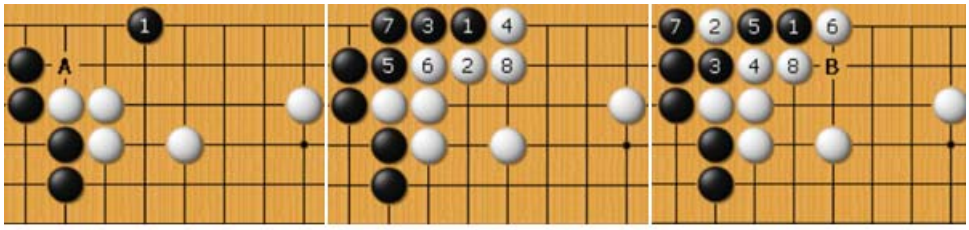
There are certain endgame moves against which you should know the correct responses. If you don't answer with the right move, the loss will be significant even in the endgame. Obviously it will be difficult to cover all moves here. Instead, let's look at some examples and remember just one thing: you should not reply automatically to your opponent's move.



Dia. 1 Dia. 2 Dia. 3 Dia. 4

Diagram 1-4: White 1 in Dia.1 looks like an ordinary sente endgame. It is easy for Black to think that Black 2 in Dia.2 is the correct answer. Black expects that White will connect at 4 and then he will connect at 3.

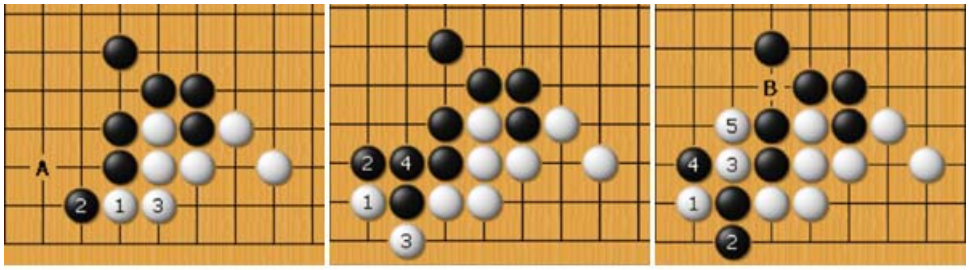
However, White won't connect at 4 but cut at 3 as shown in Dia.2. After Black captures White 1, White forces Black to answer with 6 and 8, and makes a living in the corner Dia.3 Dia.4



Dia.5 Dia.6 Dia.7

Diagram 5-7: Looking to Black 1 in Dia.5, the large knight's move played on the first line is called the ``monkey jump.'' This is a very effective endgame move and it's also very difficult for the opponent to answer. Although the correct answer varies according to the situation, you can see the main idea in this example.

There are usually two ways to answer Black 1: to attach from above; and to reduce the liberties of Black, then block. The former is shown in Dia.6 give an atari with B. This is slightly better in the sense of profit, but not commendable because Black will lose the sente. White's blocking at A in Dia. 1 before Black's playing 1 is a reverse sente endgame worth 9 points for White, because now White has the advantage to bend at 7 in sente in Dia.7. I'll leave the verification to you.



Dia. 8 Dia. 9 Dia. 10

Diagram 8-10: White 1 and 3 in Dia.8 make a sente endgame forcing Black to answer with A. Or, White will attach at 1 and reduce Black's territory severely as in Dia.9 even in senteDia.10

Consequently, it would be a huge endgame move for Black to come down at 1 in Dia.8. It is said to be about 15 points.

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Lesson 52: Haengma Part (1)

``Haengma'' is a Korean word literally meaning the ``movement of horses.'' In Korean board game terminology, a ``horse'' refers to a game piece, which is a stone in Baduk. There is no movement but only the placement of stones in Baduk, so what ``movement'' means in this context is the relationship between stones. For instance, some of the moves we've already seen, such as the knight's move and the diagonal, can also be called the knight's haengma and the diagonal haengma.

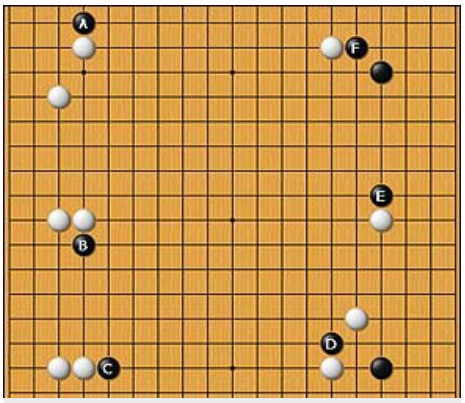
The use of the concept of haengma can be interpreted as a classification of the moves. By classifying them, we can extract the uniqueness of a certain kinds of moves and sort them under the term of haengma. Without a doubt, it is very helpful to know the characteristics of certain moves in choosing one's next course of action in a game.

Attachment

An attachment means a play touching an enemy stone, of which there are several kinds. The black stones in Dia.1

marked with letters are some examples of various attachments. Each one has a specific name such as the underneath attachment for A, belly attachment for B, nose attachment for C, attachment across the knight's move for D, side attachment for E, and diagonal attachment for F.

As mentioned above, these attachments have a common trait, though they have different appearances.



Dia. 1

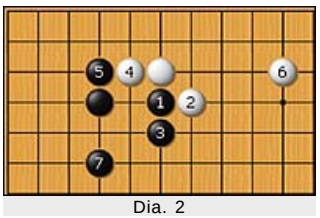
1_An attachment makes both sides strong. In Dia.2,

Black 1 is an attachment and the sequence up to 7 is a famous joseki. In the resulting situation Black and White are both stronger than before.

2_ You can derive two principles from the first characteristic; attach at your opponent's strong stones, and don't attach at your opponent's weak stones. In Dia.3, there are two white stones, A

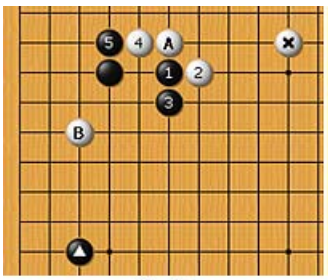
and B, for Black to attach to.

However, the situations around those two stones are different. A has a friendly stone marked with an x, while B is under the attack of the △-marked black stone. In this case, Black should attach at the stronger one, namely A, since that makes the stronger even stronger, but also makes the weaker even weaker. On the contrary, to attach at the weaker one is pointless. As shown in Dia.4,

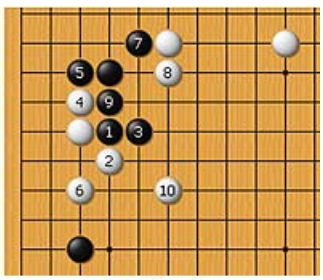


Dia. 2

both white groups are strong enough and Black cannot get a chance to attack one of them.



Dia. 3

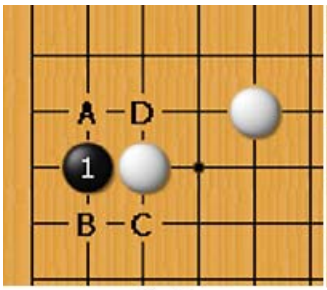


Dia. 4

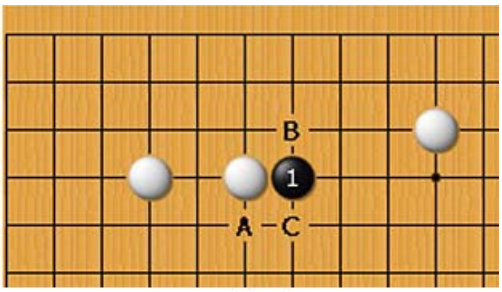
3_It is very hard for the opponent to ignore an attachment because stones of both players are located too close. Therefore, an attachment can be a good means to sound out the answer of your opponent. Black 1 in Dia.5 is a move probing where White will play among A to D.

According to White's answers, Black can either keep playing in that area or go elsewhere. To attach at 1 in Dia.6 is another

example of asking White where he would answer. Thus, there are lots of cases in which an attachment plays a good role in starting a new situation. You can reduce your opponent's territory, begin a fight, and sometimes settle weak stones of your own.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

On the other hand, it is not easy to answer an attachment correctly. That will be the topic of the next lesson.

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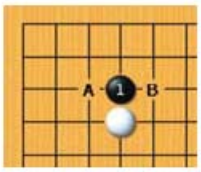
Lesson 53 : Haengma (Part 2)

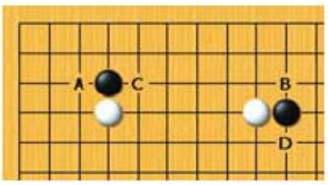
Tips on Horse Movement

Correct Answers to an Attachment

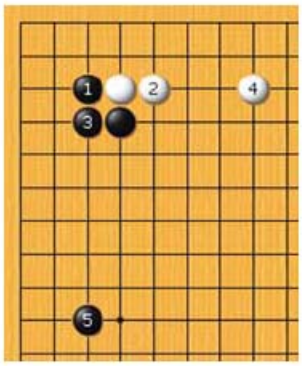
There is a proverb about attachments that states, "bend when being attached." This means that to bend is the most common and the strongest counter against an attachment. For instance, if Black attaches at 1 in Dia.1, then A and B are possible bends for White. However, it is not a simple matter to select between these two moves. Let's start with the meaning of the direction of a bend. In Dia.2, A, a bend from the corner, and B, under the attaching stone, are for profit; bends from the side, C and D, over the attaching stone, are for influence.



Dia.1



Dia. 2

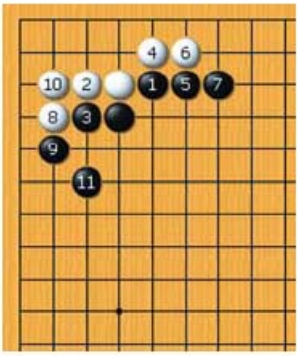


Dia.3

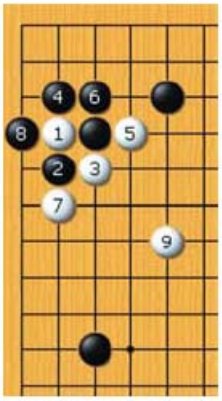
More often than not, the direction of the bend is up to your decision. For example, if you want to secure the territory, you may play from the corner as shown in Dia.3. On the contrary, if you want to build up an outside influence, you may play from the side and confine the opponent in the corner as in Dia.4.

However, when there is the opponent's stone located at a one-space distance, the answer is no longer the player's option. In other words, if White attaches with A or B, Black must inevitably bend with C or D. If not, Black will be in trouble for being cut by White.

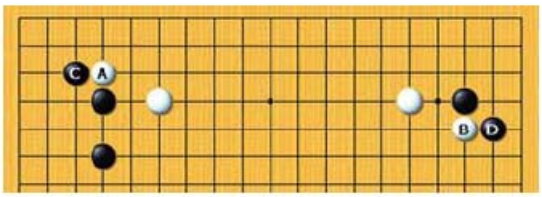
What is difficult is the fact that to bend is not always the optimal move. Sometimes it is better to stretch instead. The position shown in Dia.6 is one such case. If Black bends with 2, he can secure the territory in the corner, but also should allow White to erase his framework on the left side. To cut a bend like White 3 is a move often used when being surrounded by the opponent. It gives White the chance to play atari twice with 5 and 7, and helps him to escape from Black's blockade.



Dia. 4



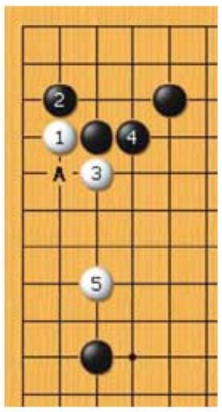
Dia.6



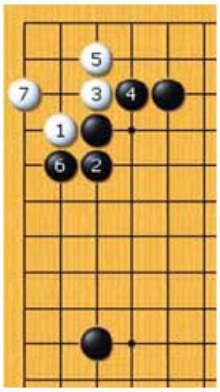
Dia. 5

Black 2 in Dia.7 also lets White settle on the side up to 5. If Black cuts and captures White 1 with A instead of 4, the sequence will return to the one in Dia.6. Therefore, it is better for Black to extend with 2 in Dia.8. Although White can live in the corner with 3 to 7, it is satisfactory for Black to build up a large territorial influence to the left side.

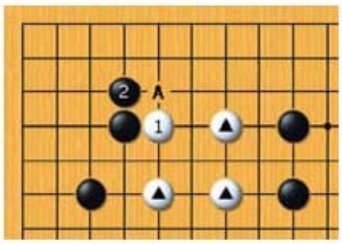
There are times when you shouldn't answer with a bend. Since a bend leaves a cutting point as shown previously, if the opponent is strong with the assistance of friendly stones as in Dia.9, you shouldn't bend at A but should extend at 2. If Black bends, White will cut at 2 and a fight will follow, which is unfavorable to Black.



Dia. 7



Dia. 8



Dia. 9

An attachment can also be used as a ladder break or a ko threat, which are dangerous to answer to with a bend. In other words, if you bend against a ko threat, your opponent will gain a lot of ko threats by cutting your bend.

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Lesson 54 : Haengma (Part 3)

Tips on Horse Movement

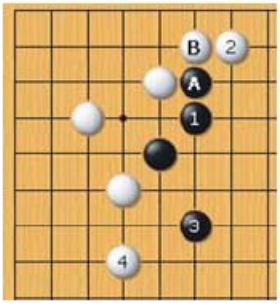
In general, to cut the opponent's stones means an attack. However, sometimes a cut is used as a means to break through a disadvantageous circumstance. On the other hand, it is not easy to know how to cut or how to move against a cut. Here you will learn them all with some well-said proverbs.

1. Cut When Distressed

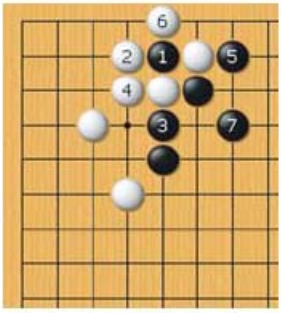
There is a saying, "'cut first and think later,'" which expresses how useful a cutting can be in changing a situation. Although the cutting stone itself inevitably becomes weak, it can show a way out from the original trouble through its sacrifice.

Diagram 1 This is a situation where Black attaches with A and White bends at B. Black should find a way to settle his stones inside White's area as soon as possible. For this, Black 1 is a wrong choice, leaving his stones floating without a base.

Diagram 2 In this case, to cut with 1 is a good move. Owing to the sacrifice of Black 1, Black can make a good shape by giving ataris with 3 and 5.



Dia.1

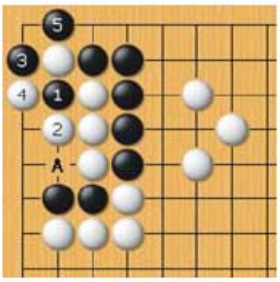


Dia. 2

Diagram 3 Here, black stones look to be dead. There is only one chance to save some of them.

Diagram 4 It is to cut at 1. Up to 5, Black succeeds in making a ko. If White loses the ko and retreats with A, then Black can live in the corner by taking White 4 in sente.

Dia. 3



Dia. 4

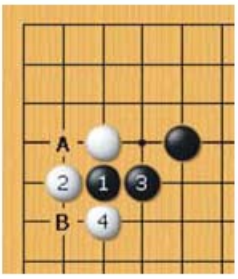
2. Cut the Side You Don't Want/ Capture the Cutting Stone

These two proverbs are actually two sides of the same coin. The cutting player should cut the side he doesn't want to attack, because the player being cut will capture the cutting stone. Let's look at the example.

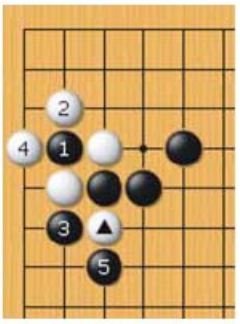
Diagram 5 The sequence shown is part of a famous 4-5 joseki. When White bends at 4, there are two cutting points for Black.

Diagram 6 If Black wants to capture White 4, he should cut at 1, A in Dia.5. Since White should capture the cutting stone, namely Black 1, (the reason for White's play will be discussed later), Black can capture the ▲-marked white stone with 3 and 5.

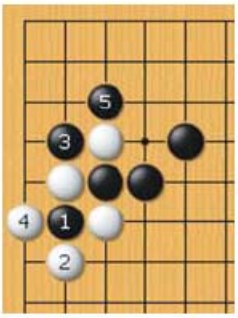
Diagram 7 If Black wants the corner, Black will cut at B of Dia.5. Again, White has to capture the cutting stone and Black obtains the corner up to 5.



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

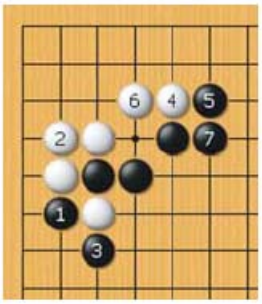


Dia. 7

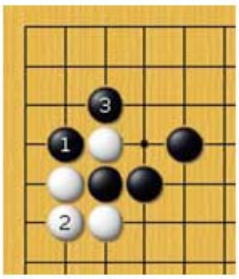
However, why is it that White cannot help but capture the cutting stone? Why can't he save the stone his opponent wants to kill?

Diagram 8 To answer these questions, you need to compare this with the result of Dia.7. As you can see, White doesn't capture the cutting stone but connects the other cutting point. Of course, White can save the corner by playing like this. However, the shape in the corner is not as good as the one in Dia.6. In Dia.6, the white stones are perfectly safe so that they don't need any more moves to strengthen them. In contrast, White should play 4 and 6 here, which strengthens the opponent as a result. This is too much good luck for Black, and he is even happier than if he could have gotten the corner as he originally intended.

Diagram 9 To connect at 2 is also bad. While Black gets the same amount of profit as in Dia.7, White cannot even make a base for his stones.



Dia. 8



Dia. 9

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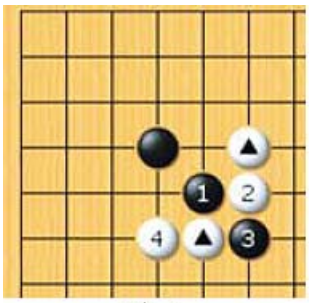
Lesson 55 : Haengma (Part 4)

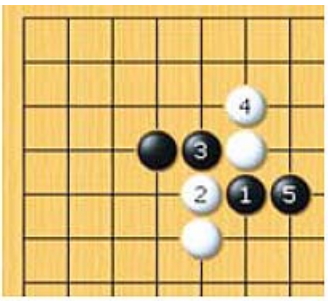
How to Cut Knight's Moves

Continuing from the last lesson, let's see how to cut the opponent's knight's move.

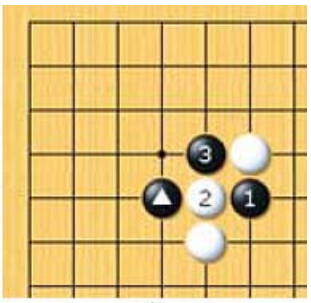
3. Cut Across a Knight's Move



Dia. 1



Dia. 2



Dia. 3

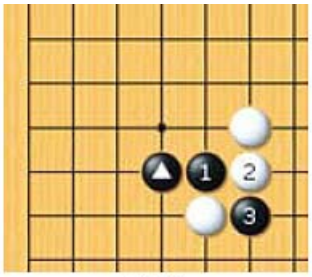
Diagram 1 When the opponent has a

knight's shape as with the two ▲-marked white stones, it is not good to cut with a diagonal move as Black 1. Up to 4, Black becomes weak, while White makes a well-built straight shape.

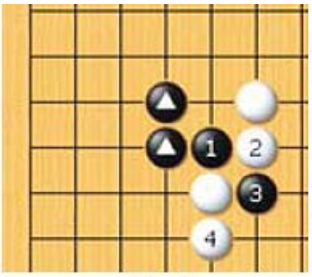
Diagram 2 Therefore, when you cut a knight's move, it is good to cut across it as here. Now, the shapes of both sides are well balanced.

Diagram 3 Surely it is not always good

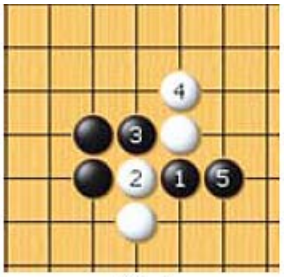
to cut across. When Black is located at △, Black cannot cut with 1 and 3 because he himself will have more weaknesses than the opponent.



Dia. 4



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

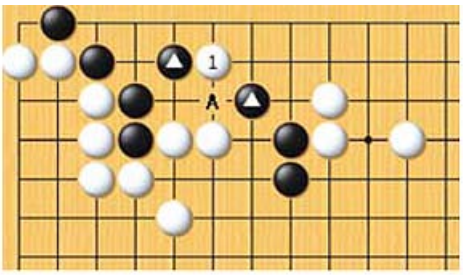
Diagram 4 So, it's better for Black to push with 1 and then cut with 3.

>Diagram 5 In contrast, if there are two

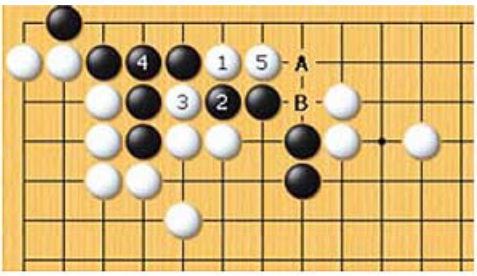
stones located like the △-marked stones, Black shouldn't cut White with 1 and 3. As you see, the two marked stones and Black 1 compose an empty triangle, a notorious bad shape that you must avoid.

Diagram 6 Here, the cutting across manifests its usefulness. Now Black's shape is even stronger than the one in Dia.2.

Since it is such a good move to cut across a knight's move, it is usually better not to cut through the cutting move.



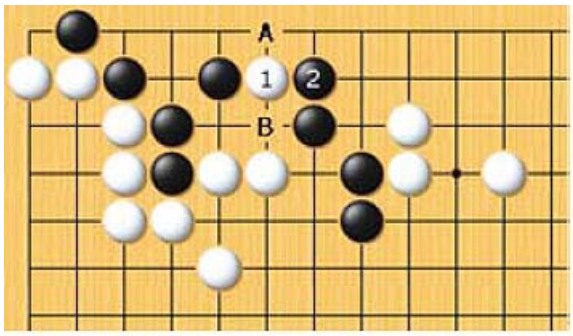
Dia. 7



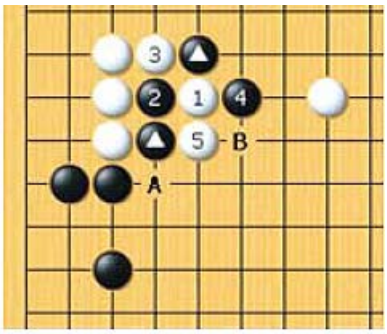
Dia. 8

Diagram 7 For example, White 1 is a

move cutting across Black's knight's move marked with △. If Black cuts White's connection with A, then he will fall into a trap.



Dia. 9



Dia. 10

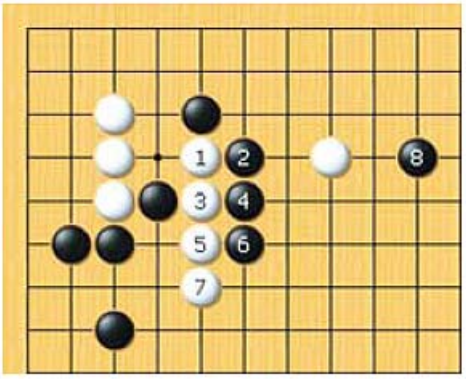
Diagram 8 If Black pushes with 2 to cut

White 1 from its ally, White will make atari with 3 and bridge under with 5. It is impossible for Black to cut this bridge by bending at A because White will cut at B and give another atari.

Diagram 9 Black shouldn't cut in this case, but just come down with 2. This is the only way for him to save his stones in the corner. If White descends at A, then Black will cut with B since White cannot be connected with his stones on the right. If White just connects at B, Black can bridge under with A.

Diagram 10 Similarly, if White cuts

across Black's knight's move with 1, it is not good to cut through it. White coming out with 5 creates two urgent weaknesses of Black at A and B, which are impossible for Black to defend at the same time.



Dia. 11

Diagram 11 Therefore, it is better for Black not to cut the cutting move, but to bend with 2. After forcing White to extend until 7, Black can counterattack the white stone on the upper side with 8.

Although there is no proverb established yet, it may not be wrong to say from what we have seen above, ``don't cut the stone cutting across a knight's move.''

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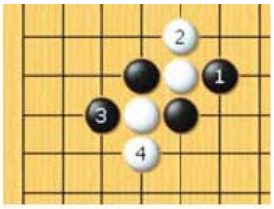
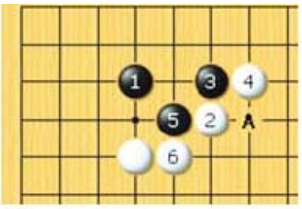
Lesson 56 : Haengma (Part 5)

Tips for Atari, the Bad Move

Today's topic is ``atari.'' Atari is the first skill beginners learn, and probably because of that, many players play atari habitually without a plan. Since an atari is a sente move, it is not easy to feel the demerit of an atari. However, if you play atari when you cannot capture the opponent, it will usually be a bad move. Also, it is more sophisticated to play atari under your full control, when its effect can be maximized.



Dia. 1

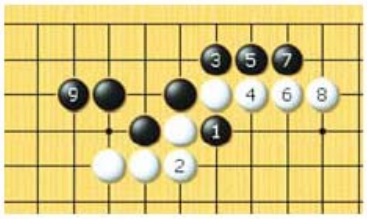


Dia. 2

Diagram 1 When there is an escape your opponent can easily find, it is usually better not to play atari. To give atari with 1 and 3 leaves weaknesses only in Black's shape and makes the opponent stronger.

There is a way to know whether an atari is good or bad; if the atari makes the opponent stronger, it is bad, and vice versa.

Diagram 2 This example is taken from a 4-5 point joseki. It is tempting for Black to play at A, giving atari.

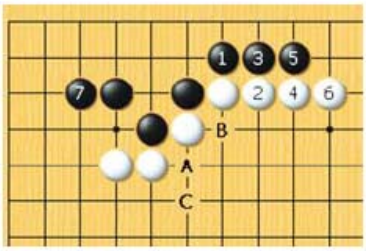


Dia.3

Diagram 3 The sequence up to Black 9 is expected after Black's atari at 1, but this is not the optimal result for Black. Let's compare this with the result of Dia.4.

Diagram 4 Even if Black plays 1 the result will be almost the same, except that now there remains an opportunity for Black to play atari at A and extend at C. However, this small difference is a great benefit for Black compared to the Black 1 in Dia.3,

which doesn't weaken White's shape but also cannot be easily saved.



Dia. 4

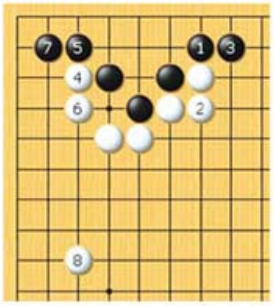
Diagram 5 Therefore, White will not extend from 2 to 6 as in Dia.4 but will connect with 2 as shown here, and this is a joseki. Now White's shape is free of weakness, while Black has strength on the upper side and also gets the sente.

There is a proverb that ``the stronger lose because of grudging sentes, while the weaker lose because of exhausting them.'' It means the weaker waste sentes without getting their full use, while the stronger wait so long for a chance to use a sente that they miss the best timing. Usually, the ``sente'' the weaker use up, referred to in this proverb, is atari.

Diagram 6 This is an example of how the weaker can use a sente in vain. Black has to save his group in the corner. What will you do?

Diagram 7 Of course it is not difficult for Black to save it by using an atari at

1. However, the sequence up to 5 is not the best outcome for Black. He succeeded in saving his group, but in gote.



Dia. 5

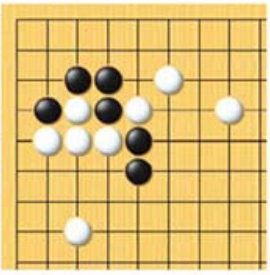
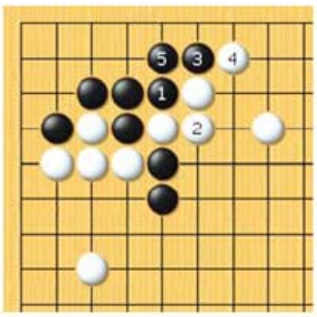

Dia. 6

Diagram 8 In this case, the attachment at 1 is a good move, resulting in Black in sente. This is a skill using an atari only as a threat, not as an actual play. White cannot neglect playing 4, because if it did, Black would capture the ▲-marked white stone by giving atari with A and connecting the two black stones in the center.

If you compare the last two diagrams, you will see that Black 1 in Dia.7 is

wasted. Supposed that White 4 in Dia.8 is played at A. Since it also

protects the ▲-marked stone, there is no one who would play at 1 of Dia.7 in gote.



Dia.7

Dia.8

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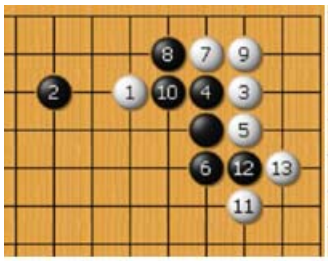
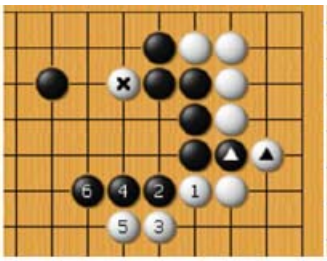
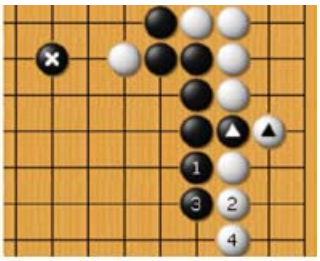
Lesson 57 : Wrongly Used Initiative Part(1)


Dia.1

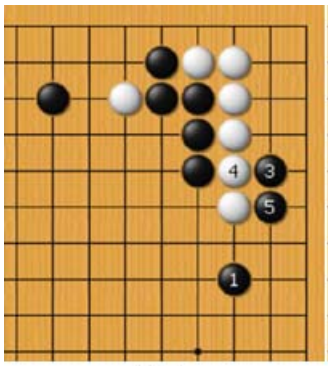

Dia.2

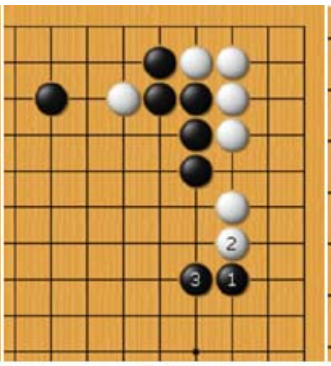

Dia.3

In Baduk, all moves must have their reasons for being played; even sente moves cannot be exempt from this rule. In other words, some sente moves can be awfully bad, and it is better not to play them at all, like the atari introduced in the previous lesson. One example of a bad sente is to push without any purpose.

Diagram 1: The sequence up to White 11 is a famous 4-4 point joseki which you' ve already seen. The problem is Black 12. This is sente, but it is undesirable.

Diagram 2 If Black plays elsewhere after exchanging the ▲-marked stones, White can push up as shown to limit Black' s territory and to enlarge White' s framework on the side. Since the exchange of the ▲-marked stones lessen the black stones' liberties, it is impossible for Black to bend against White 3 with 5.


Dia.4


Dia.5

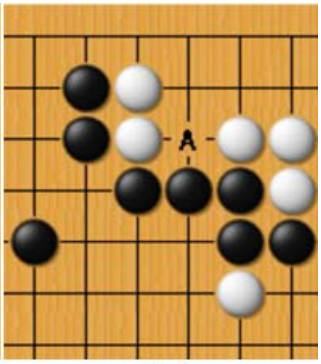
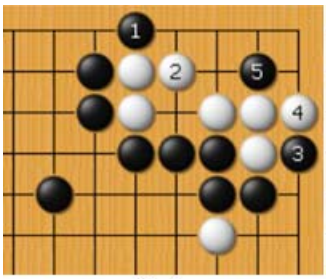

Dia.6

Diagram 3 Therefore, after the exchange, it is inevitable for Black to push along the side. But, because the x-marked black stone is too close to the wall, Black' s shape is overly concentrated. On the other hand, White can make territory on the side and also stay one step ahead of Black.

Diagram 4 Actually, Black 1 should be played as shown here. Without the bad exchange, Black can invade from underneath with 3 and 5, and attack the white stones if White ignores Black 1.


Dia.7

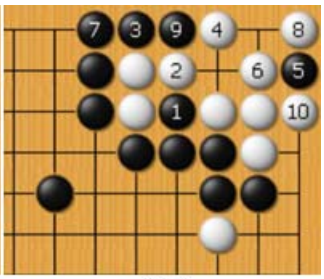

Dia.8

Diagram 5 So, it is proper for White to butt with 2 and guard the weakness at 3 in Dia.4. This result is good for Black in building influence on the right side and supporting the upper side.

Diagram 6 You can lose your opponent that you have already trapped, if you push carelessly. If you meet this situation, would you push at 'A?'

Diagram 7 As you may know, the white stones in the corner can be easily killed with Black 1, 3 and 5.

Diagram 8 However, if Black pushes at 1 first, it is impossible to kill them afterward. Now the exchange of Black 3 and White 4 gives a good eye-shape to White. Although Black tries to make a ko with 5 and 7, White 8 cleverly eludes the ko and makes a perfect life.

Diagram 9 This kind of bad push can be also found in a professional game. The situation shown here happened in a game between two professionals. The black group on the right side is attacked and needs to make two

eyes. The critical move is Black 3. It aims to reduce White's territory in the corner as much as possible, but actually causes a big loss to Black. I'll give the explanation of how the loss happens in the next lesson. Please try to figure out yourself how it happens, and what Black should do instead of 3.

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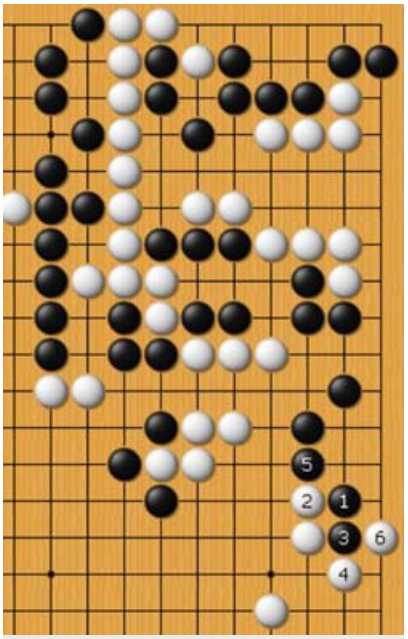

Dia.9

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Lesson 58 : Wrongly Used Initiative Part (2)

Dia.1

Dia.2

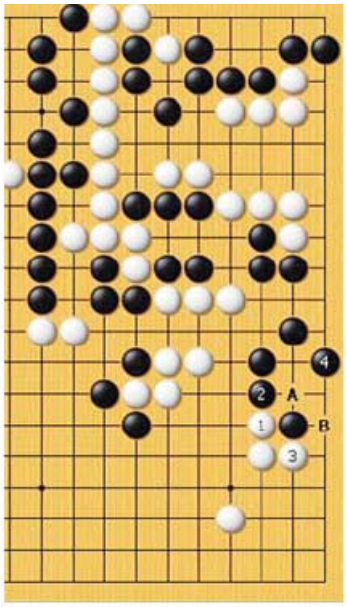
Dia.3

It is usually good to play a sente move (initiative) since you can keep the initiative. However, because of this advantage, it is easy to develop a bad habit of playing a sente regardless of the situation at hand. The professional's example shown in the last lesson is also an outcome of this kind of bad habit.

Diagram 1 After pushing at 'x', Black cannot help but answer with 2 to White 1. Then, White 3 and 5 is a good sequence to kill the △-marked black stones. If White plays 5 first, Black will answer at 'A' and then make two eyes with 'B' against White's bend at 3.

Diagram 2 Of course, Black can save half the group by making two eyes with 1 and 3. However, he cannot save the △-marked stones and it would be a big loss. This is what happened in the real game. If Black captures the white stone with 4 instead of 3, the whole group will be dead because White will play at 3 and make a false eye.

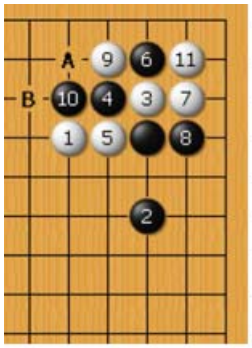
Diagram 3 If Black connects at 1 in order to save the △-marked stones, then the whole black group will die owing to White 2 and 4. After White 4, Black cannot make two separate eyes because he cannot play at 'A.'



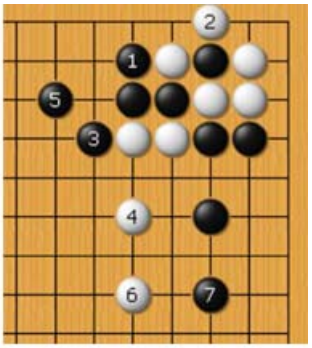
Dia. 4

Diagram 4 As a consequence, instead of 'x' in Dia.1, Black should have played at 2 here. Against White 3, now it is possible for Black to play 4, which eliminates the danger of losing half the group. If White plays atari with 'A,' Black will just descend at 'B.'

Diagram 5 Here is another example of a bad sente. This is a sequence from a 3- 4 joseki and there are two choices for Black's next move. Which one will you choose, A or B?



Dia. 5



Dia. 6

Diagram 6 I'm sure that you didn't choose 'A' because we are talking about bad sentes in this lesson. But why is it bad? In here, the white group in the corner is completely alive. Also, because Black has to spend 3 and 5 to reinforce the group, White can go ahead in the center. Let's compare this with the one in Dia.7.

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Dia. 7

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Lesson 59 :Tips for a Handicap Game (Part 1)

Even though you' ve already mastered the basics, it must still be hard for you to be in control of the 19x19 board. In this case, handicap games with stronger players can be a good way to practice what you' ve learned. The handicap stones, pre-positioned on the star-points, will be a great help when you don' t know what to do with the empty board. A handicap game also lets you learn from those stronger than you the things that cannot be completely explained in books. It is also true that you will find more chances to play with stronger opponents than those of the same level.

The problem in playing handicap games is that stronger players will not play as you expect. This is not because they want to torture you, but because they cannot win a game only with joseki-like moves. Indeed, josekis and the joseki-like normal moves are just the standard you can follow. They lead to equal results for both players when the game is well balanced. However, if one leads the game, the other one should try an emergency method. In a handicap game, therefore, the one who plays later, namely White, conceives many makeshift moves.

When confronting an unexpected situation, almost all the weaker players become nervous and start complaining that their opponents want to trick them. However, usually all the bad results occur not because of the makeshift move of the stronger player, but because of the greed of the weaker player. Let' s see an example.

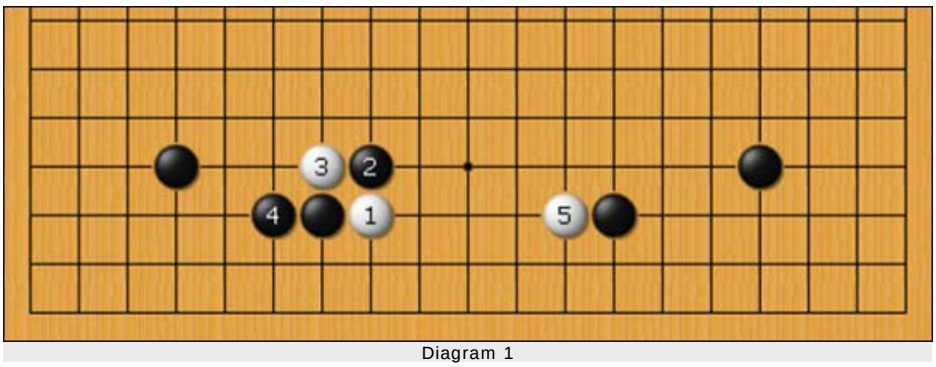

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 White attached with 1 when Black occupied the corners and the side with

four stones already. Black 2 and 4 are the correct answers against this attachment. Now, White 5 is a makeshift move for the stronger player and a troublemaker for the weaker player.

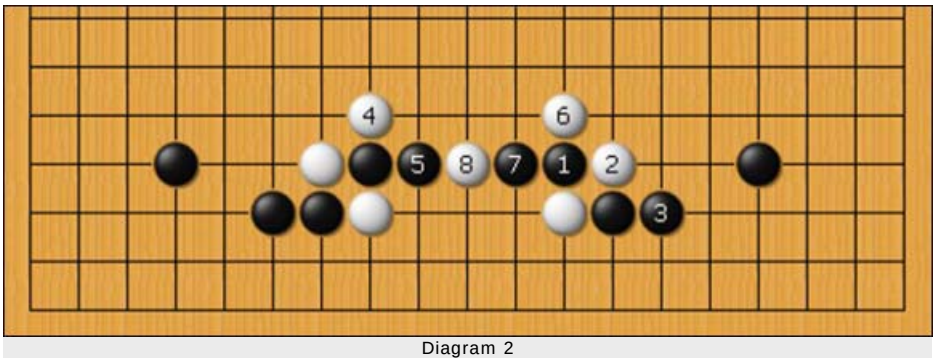

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 Black 1 is what White expected. White 2 to 6 is a sequence to make a symmetrical shape and White 8 is the vital point of the shape.

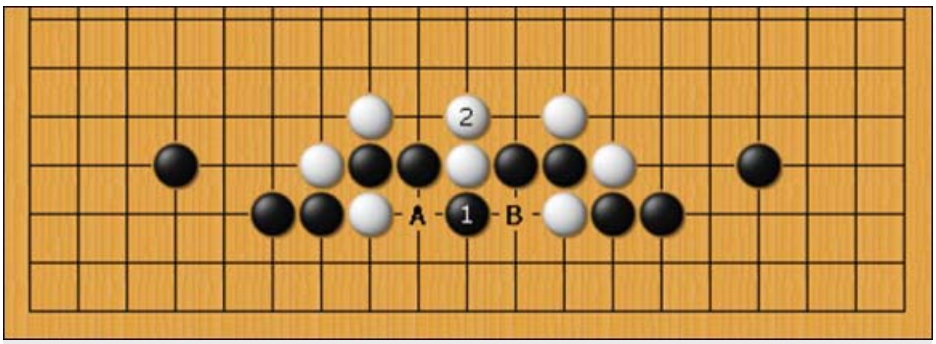

Diagram 3

Diagram 3 If Black makes atari with 1, he will have two weaknesses at A and B. It

will be the same even if he plays at 2 and White extends at 1.

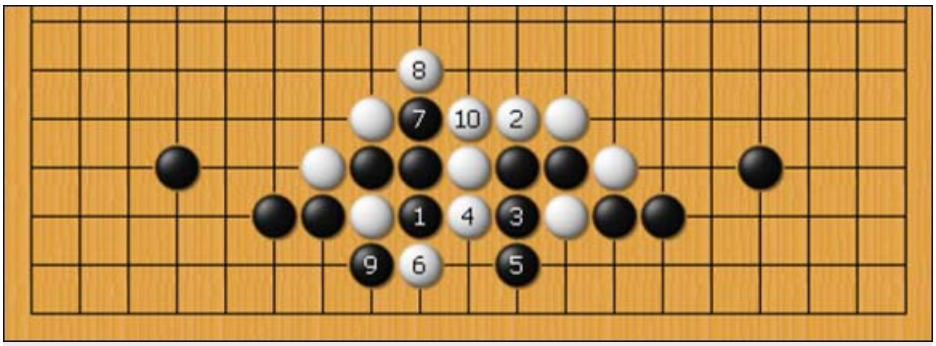

Diagram 4

Diagram 4 Black 1 here

is the only thing Black can do. However, the resulting situation is miserable for Black since his shape is all lumped together, while White makes an influence and also gets sente.

As mentioned above, this unhappy thing happened to Black because Black wanted too much. It is usual for the weaker player to think that the lower side is his territory when he puts four stones there. But, although the pre-positioned stones can be much help in making territory, they cannot be the perfect guard. Maybe I can say that the maximum use of the pre-positioned stones is to give Black a more favorable situation to make territory.

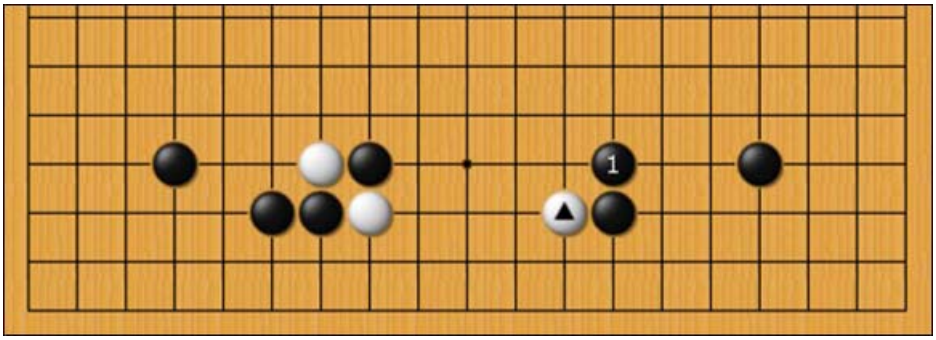

Diagram 5

Diagram 5 If Black knows the limit of what he can get, it will become somewhat easier to choose a move against White ▲. In General, it would be a great success for Black if he can keep either the corner or the side. In other words, if Black comes up with 1 against White ▲ and protects the territory in both corners while White struggles to live on the side, Black has nothing to complain about.

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Lesson 60 :Tips for a Handicap Game Part (2)

As you saw in the last lesson, the weaker make mistakes because they want far more than what they can reasonably expect. They often think that they have territory when they actually don't, and become overly upset about the logical demands of the opponent.

However, more often than not, people also mess up games due to their passive way of playing. Namely, the weaker try only to keep what they already have.

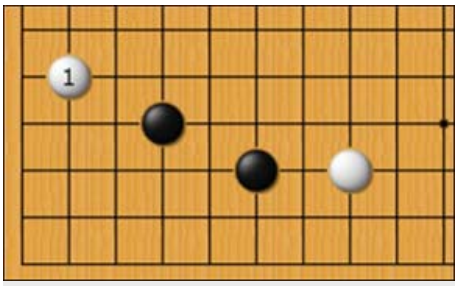

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 White 1 in this situation is a very common move for the stronger player. For Black, it is important not to endeavor to protect the corner in which he has already spent two moves.

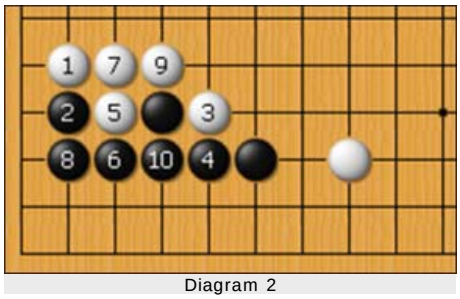

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 This would be the most useless result for Black, though he succeeded in keeping the corner. There is not much profit for Black while White makes good influence even in sente.

Diagram 3 To go out with 4 instead of Black 8 in Dia.2 cannot change the result. White just gets more territory than in Dia.2 with 5 and 7, and builds a wall with 9 and 11.

Diagram 4 Therefore, it is best for Black not to regret giving the corner to White. As you see, the influence of Black is powerful enough to offset the loss in the corner.

In handicap games, of course, it is usual for Black to have an unequal result and that's why handicap stones are needed. However, you may feel that the effect of handicap stones disappears very quickly through a few passive compromises, and you're already losing in the middle of the game.

The existence of handicap stones cannot guarantee your victory if you stubbornly play in a passive way. What it actually guarantees is that you can fight against the stronger player in more favorable circumstances.

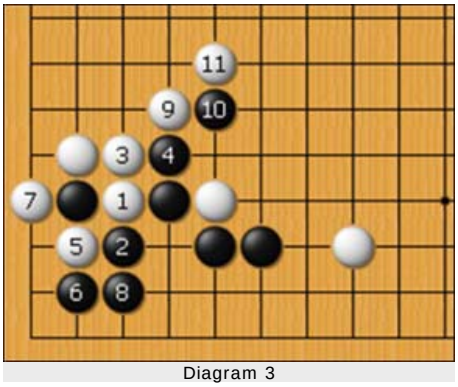

Diagram 3

Therefore, it would be very helpful for the weaker to play a handicap game as if he is playing an even game. In other words, by suggesting to yourself that you're playing an even game, there would be more chances for you to find the way of using the favorable circumstances accordingly.

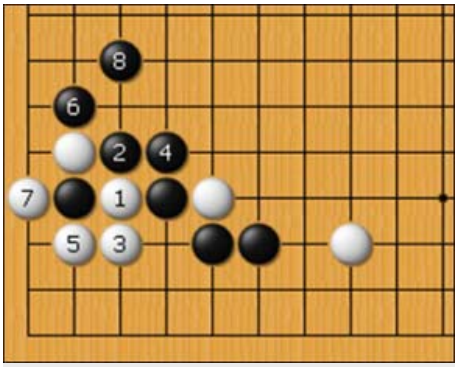

Diagram 4

One thing more, I meet many amateurs who try moves they are unsure of in the handicap games. Their reason is that they just want to learn how the stronger player would respond to the moves, and they don't think about winning the game itself.

However, even in a handicap game, winning is very important. It is important not because victory is the main goal of Baduk, but because you can learn far more when you win than when you indifferently give up a game at the cost of some new information.

It is the stronger player who has to contrive many unusual things to make up the difference caused by the handicap stones. The order of the weaker player is to learn in the course of winning against all the tricks and traps of his opponent.

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Lesson 61 : Deviating From Intended Sequences

As a beginner, it is good to have the aid of "joseki"s. However, a joseki, or intended sequence, tells you what to do and how to do it only when your opponent plays as you expect. What if the opponent deviates from the intended sequence? The stronger player can play as expected or not; what should the weaker player do in the case of the latter?

In fact, it is very hard to counter all the non-joseki moves of your opponent. In order to punish the deviating moves, it is not enough to memorize only the joseki moves, but you should also know the purpose of each move in joseki, what it's aiming for. But how can the weaker player know all these things?

I have to confess that most of that knowledge comes from experience. However, there is always a way out, as the saying goes. Here are some conventional joseki deviations you can prepare.

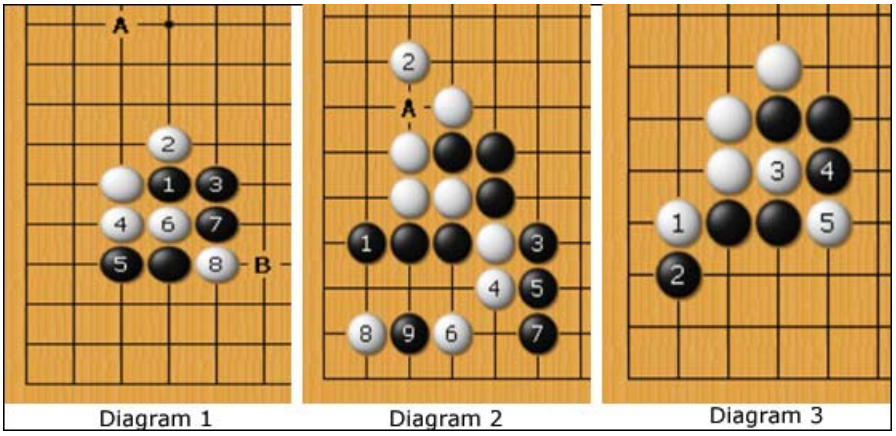

Diagram 1 White 6 and 8 may be the most famous deviating moves. The joseki sequence is White A instead of 6 and Black B. Like most of the deviating moves, this ends up with a catastrophic result.

Diagram 2 Black 1 is a good move to strengthen Black's position in the cornerby forcing White to protect the cutting point at A with 2. Black 3 to 7 are possible owing to this move. When White tries to settle himself in the cornerwith 8, Black 9 is a finishblow to frustrate White's attempt. Since thissituation is so well known, I'll leave the verification after Black 9 to you.

Diagram 3 White 1 is a variation which prevents Black from playing there as in Dia.2.

Diagram 4 To cut at 1 forcing White to connect at 2 is what White wants Black to do. Now, Black 3 to 9, far from driving White to the dead-end as in Dia.2, causes a disaster of the black stones in the corner up to White 14.

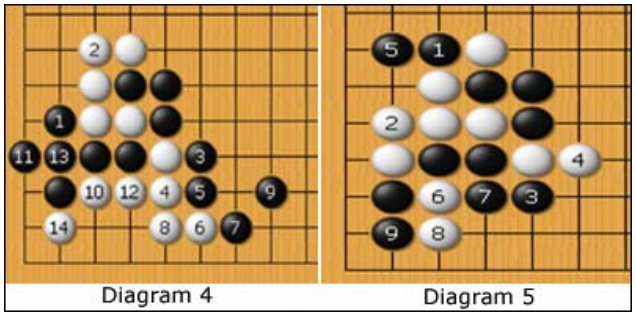

Diagram 5 In this case, it is severe to cut directly at 1. To connect at 2 might seem to be a good move but it actually just brings down ruin on White. If White saves the one white stone against Black's atari at 3, Black's descending at 5 will kill the white stones on the left side. White 6 and 8 will be frustrated by Black 7 and 9.

Diagram 6 Therefore, White cannot help but give up the stone and capture Black 1 with 4. The resulting situation with Black's ponnuki at 5 is so good for Black that White should regret his deviating from joseki.

Diagram 7 If White doesn't want to allow Black's ponnuki, he should play as shown in this diagram. However, this is still good for Black since White cannot save the white stone on the lower side but lets Black have a huge territory on that side.

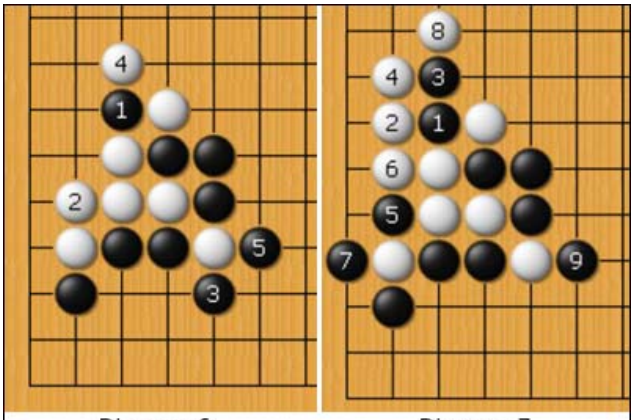

Diagram 6 Diagram 7

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Lesson 62 : Deviating From Intended Sequences (Part 2)

The first step in coping with "joseki," or intended sequences, deviation is to remind yourself that a joseki sequence is not always invariable. In fact, joseki should change according to the full context of the board. Therefore, if there is a situation you hadn't anticipated, don't worry too much; rather, try to figure out where exactly the opponent deviates, and what he wants you to do.

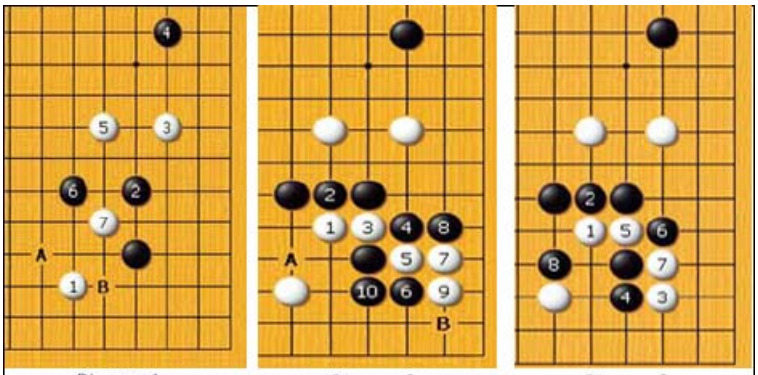

Diagram 1 Diagram 2 Diagram 3

Diagram 1 The sequence up to 6 happens often in handicap games. The joseki sequence is White A instead of 7 and then Black B, so it shouldn't be good for White to play 7. But, how Black can punish White?

Diagram 2 Since White 1 is peeping two cutting points in Black's shape, the first thing that comes to Black's mind would be to connect one of them. And it seems OK for him to connect at 2 since White's direct cutting with 3 and 5 is ineffectual. Up to 10, Black can capture White 1 and 3 with A, or 5, 7, and 9 with B.

Diagram 3 However, if White doesn't cut right away and comes into the corner with 3, Black will encounter trouble. The exchange of White 3 and Black 4 makes a big difference in the situation, although it seems to be almost the same as in Dia.2.

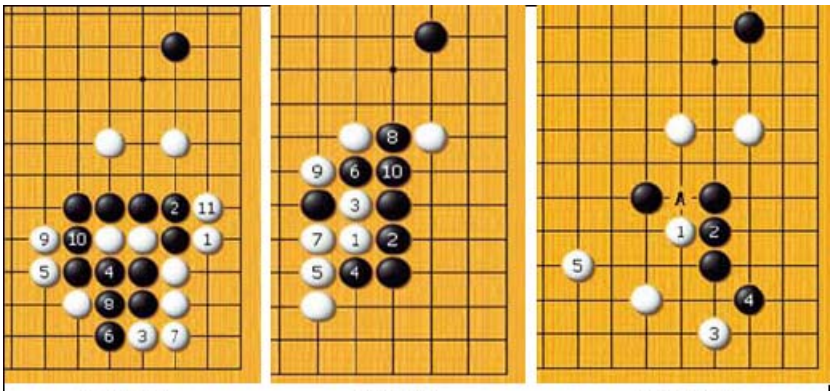

Diagram 4 Diagram 5 Diagram 6

Diagram 4 Although Black can capture White 1 and 5 with 8 in Dia.3, now White can make full use of the two sacrificed stones. While Black's shape becomes over-concentrated up to 10, White secures a safe base for the stones on the right side with 11. This result is obviously unfavorable for Black.

Diagram 5 Then, what if Black connects from the side at 2? What Black wants White to do is to cut directly with 3. As you see, Black's territory on the right side is much better than White's influence on the left side.

Diagram 6 However, White will play 3 and 5 instead of cutting directly at A. Because this result leaves potential trouble in Black's shape, Black is also unhappy with it.

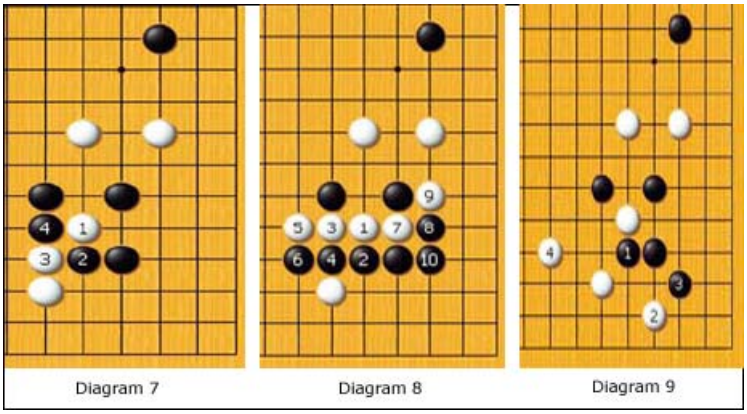

Diagram 7 Returning to the initial situation, Black pushing at 2, rather than defending one of the cutting points against White peeping at 1, is the correct answer. As he captures White 1 with 2 and 4, Black doesn't need to worry about White's cutting.

Diagram 8 If White comes out with 3 and 5 in order to save White 1, Black will just continue pushing. Even though White can cut off the two black stones up to 9, Black has no complaints about the result since he gained a huge territory on the lower side.

Diagram 9 Therefore, if Black pushes at 1 against White's peeping, it will be wise for White to give up entrapping Black by deviating from joseki and try to bring back the usual situation with 2 and 4.

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Lesson 63 : Deviating From Intended Sequence (Part 3)

It is a very common trick of the stronger player to intentionally expose his unguarded point in order to trap the weaker player. If the latter takes the bait, he will be captured.

Diagram 1 The sequence shown here is a famous joseki. While White cuts and captures the black stone jumping two spaces from the knight's approach, Black captures the white stone on the lower side and secures territory there. Of course there are many variations from this, but it generally yields a well-balanced result.

Diagram 2 To bend at 3 is a tricky move to lure Black into capturing White 3, in the order of Black A, White B, and Black C.

Diagram 3 As you see here, Black has to pay a big price for carelessly taking up the bait. Up to 8, while White makes a good influence toward the center, Black becomes a big ineffective lump. Since there is little ko threat in the beginning of a game, it might be impossible for Black to start a ko by cutting at 8 instead of connecting at 7.

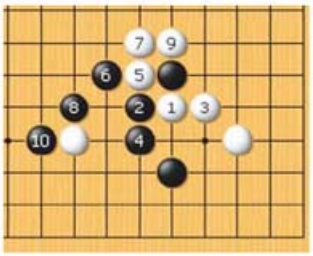

Diagram 1

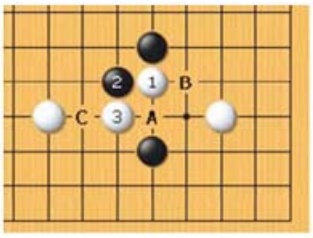

Diagram 2

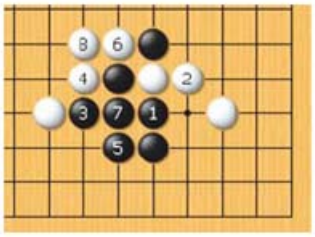

Diagram 3

Diagram 4 To go along the side with 1 to 5 is the only way for Black to save the lump, however it is just more painful for him to help White build up a burly shape in the center by extending 2 and 4.

Diagram 5 To connect at 3 instead of capturing the white stone doesn't improve the situation. It is wishful thinking on the part of Black that White will answer with 6 against his bend at 5. If White does, maybe Black can manage to save the situation by either cutting at A or playing at B, though it is not the best result.

Diagram 6 However, not all wishes come true. Against Black 5, it is the correct answer for White not to bend but to make a bamboo joint with 6. Now, it is not easy for Black to make a living in the corner, but also, there is no weakness in White's shape.

Diagram 4

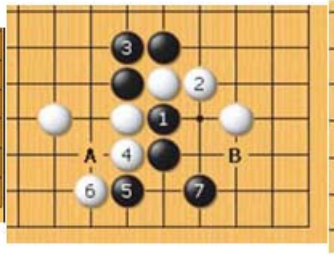

Diagram 5

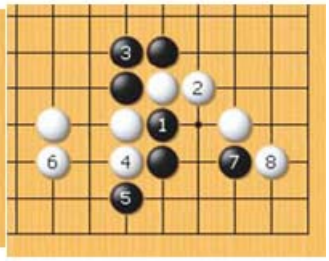

Diagram 6

Diagram 7 Therefore, for Black, the correct answer against White's tricky move is to play atari at 1. When White cuts at 4, just capture the cutting stone with the simple and easy sequence up to 9.

Diagram 8 Even if White plays ataris with 1, 3 and 5, the result is not undesirable for Black, since the key stone marked with ▲ cannot be easily captured so as to leave a weakness in White's shape. Also, Black's territory in the corner is pretty big.

Diagram 9 If Black doesn't like to give the outside to White, another choice is to connect at 4 instead of Black 7 and 9 in Dia.7. Although White's corner territory is big, the influence Black has in the center is powerful enough to compensate. If White plays 7 instead of 5, then Black will take the corner territory by playing 5 in sente (initiative).

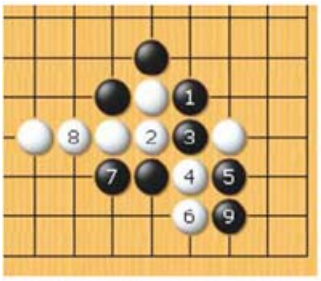

Diagram 7

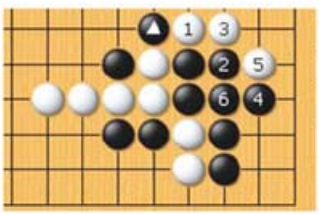

Diagram 8

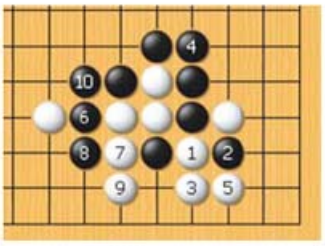

Diagram 9

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Lesson 64 : Deviating From Intended Sequence (Part 4)

Unlike the last example of joseki deviation which deceives the opponent by exposing a false weakness, this lesson will deal with a type of deviation which shows off the player's strength at reading and fighting.

In such a case, it is not so easy for the opponent to chastise the player, since he hides nothing, only manifesting his determination to fight.

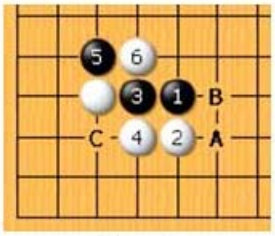

Diagram 1

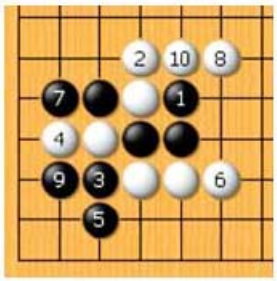

Diagram 2

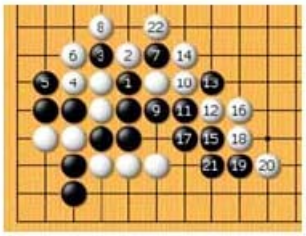

Diagram 3

Diagram 1 White 6 is a very fierce move, implying that White will try to beat Black down in this situation.

The usual move for White is, as you may know, A, B or C.

Diagram 2 In general, it is not good to play atari without a clear purpose. Since Black 5 is a good move locally, it is possible for Black to capture the two white stones in the corner. However, this result is a shame for Black since White's influence far surpasses his tiny territory in the corner.

Diagram 3 Furthermore, it is worse for Black to struggle to break out toward the center with moves 1 to 21. Because of the shortage of liberties, it is impossible for him to break through White's blockade, and up to 22, the outer wall of White is incomparably larger than Black's territory in the corner.

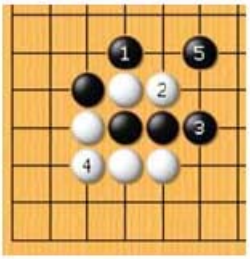

Diagram 4

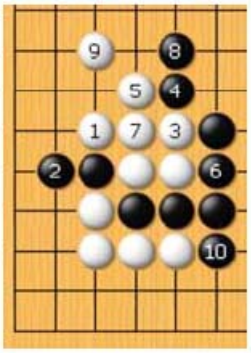

Diagram 5

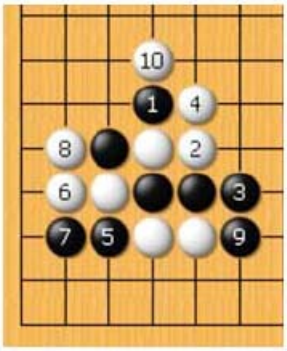

Diagram 6

Diagram 4 In this case, it is wise for Black to make a pseudonet with 5. The purpose of this move is the same as White 8 in Dia.2, i.e., to concede the corner territory to the opponent and to make influence in the center. Here, it is assumed that the ladder is unfavorable to Black.

Diagram 5 Then, the sequence following the net is a one-way street. The strong and flawless wall of Black is quite satisfactory compared to White's territory in the corner.

Diagram 6 For White, it is also possible to make a change by turning at 4 instead of connecting as in Dia.4. Then, Black just gives up the two stones on the left and secures the corner territory. Since Black can have the turn to play elsewhere, this result is also pretty good for him.

Diagram 7

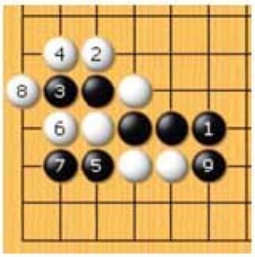

Diagram 8

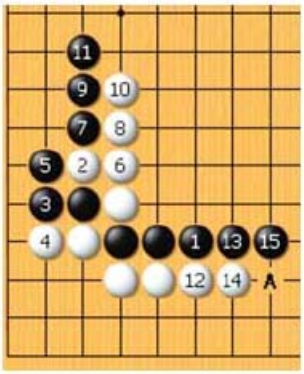

Diagram 9

Diagram 7 It is also good for Black to extend at 1 without playing atari with 1 in Dia.4. If White blocks with 2 and 4, Black will play the net with the sequence 5 to 13. This result is even better for Black than the one in Dia.5. To capture the marked white stone by ladder is out of the question.

Diagram 8 However, Black should be careful not to stick to the corner territory as shown here instead of playing the net as in Dia.7. As you see, now White gets a much stronger shape than the one in Dia.6 and moreover, the sente goes to him.

Diagram 9 As a conclusion, it is the best for White to play the sequence shown here, but this result is still more desirable for Black than for White since there remains a very good move for him at A and his center position is also good.

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Lesson 65 : Types of Ko (1)

Beginners tend to avoid situations where a ko can happen. A ko increases the number of things you have to take into account: the value of the ko, the number of ko threats, etc. However, it would be a big loss if you do not take advantage of a chance to play a ko, but just shun it altogether. Anyway, you should first become familiar with it. Let's start with the types of ko.

When we studied the value of ko, you learned about the half-point ko and the almighty ko. These are classified according to their significance. There are also those categorized by the number of kos related to each other.

Double-Ko

In a double-ko situation, the two kos involved serve the same purpose so as to work as substitutes for each other.

Diagram 1 White can capture the black group if he can make the x-marked point a false eye. To do so, however, he has to win the two kos at A and B. If it is White's turn, he can just connect one of the two kos and change the situation into a simple ko. However, if it is Black's turn, White cannot kill the black group. If Black captures one of the ▲-marked white stones, White plays a ko threat and takes the ko back, and then Black can just capture the other ▲-marked stone without playing a ko threat. Thus, White cannot end the ko even if he has many more ko threats than Black.

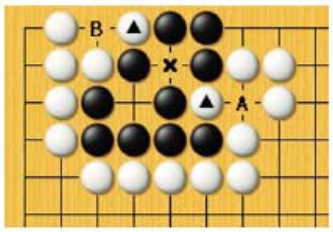

Diagram 1

However, if another ko occurs during the game, the table is turned. A double-ko gives White a big supply of ko threats because whenever White takes one of the two kos, Black should take the other.

Triple-Ko

This rare type of ko happens when three kos take place in one local situation, and both players can capture and recapture one of the three repeatedly without playing ko threats.

Diagram 2 As you see, there are three kos at A, B and C involved with the two big groups of Black and White. If Black takes one ko with 1, the triple-ko repetition begins.

Diagram 3 When Black plays 1, White will take the ko at A with 2 and Black will take the ko at B with 3 without spending any ko threats. Then, it is also not prohibited for White to take the ko with 4 as shown, since he played elsewhere before taking back the ko as the rule demands. And then, Black captures White 2 and White captures Black 3 and so on.

Now a question may arise. What if both players refuse to stop taking the kos? As you expect, it is impossible to decide the result of a triple-ko, and so the game ends as a draw. Of course, you can give up the stones involved in the triple ko by playing elsewhere if you don't want to finish the game that you're winning, as Hoonhyun Cho 9 dan did years ago in a tournament.

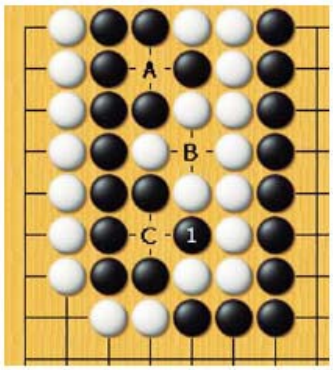

Diagram 2

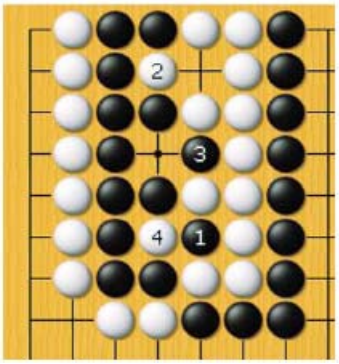

Diagram 3

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Lesson 66 : Types of Ko (2)

As seen in the previous lesson, a triple-ko is a representative example of how a ko may lead to a draw. However, there is a triple-ko which can reach a resolution, according to the rules of Baduk.

Triple-Ko with an Eye Let us imagine a triple-ko situation in which only one group has an eye.

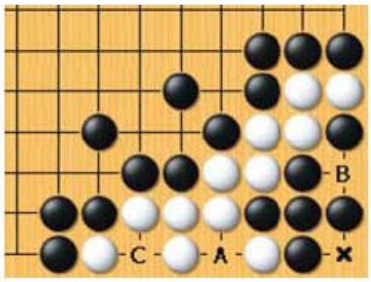

Diagram 1

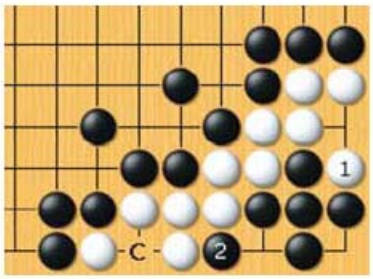

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 There are three kos between the black and the white groups in the corner at A, B, and C, and only the black group has an eye at the x-marked point on the corner edge. Now, even if it is Black' s turn, he cannot kill the white group by playing out the kos. (Please verify yourself.) Does this situation also lead to a draw?

Diagram 2 Unlike the usual triple-ko introduced in the last lesson, White cannot make a difference in this situation. In other words, White cannot start a tripleko circulation. As shown here, White 1 makes Black play 2, but after that, White cannot do anything with the ko at C. On the other hand, Black, having one eye, can always take the ko at C and begin a full circulation of the three kos. In this case, the rule says that the side that has the one eye, Black here, wins the situation without playing out the kos.

Since the example shown above is even rarer than the normal triple-ko, it is of little importance even if you forget it. Let' s return to the usual kos. Some names are not descriptive, but rather poetic. What do you think the picnic ko is?

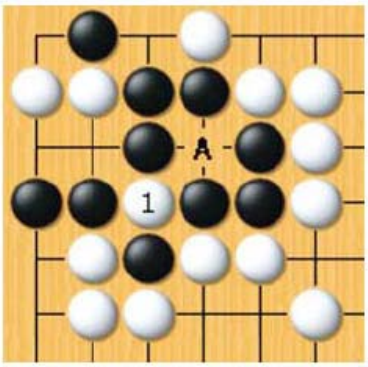

Diagram 3

Picnic Ko

This ko is called "hanami ko" in Japanese and "konnori pae" in Korean. Both names mean a flower-viewing picnic. As the name denotes, a picnic ko gives a player pleasure without any burden.

Diagram 3 The ko started by White 1 is fatal for Black since it can make the eye at A false. However, this ko doesn' t damage White even if he loses the ko, so it is a picnic ko for White.

Thousand-Year Ko

Thousand-year ko is a special example of a picnic ko.

Diagram 4 It is obvious that Black cannot end the ko at A by just connecting. If he connects at A, the black group in the corner is in the flower four shape and is dead. If Black wants to end it, he has to play at B and make White take the ko at A and win the ko.

Diagram 5 In contrast, White can connect at A whenever he wants to make the situation into a dual-life. Or, he also can start a ko by playing at B.

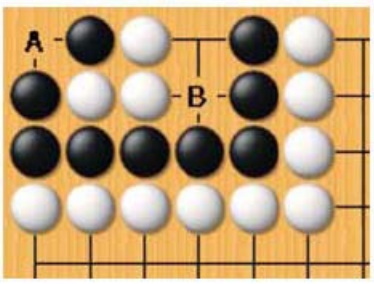

Diagram 4

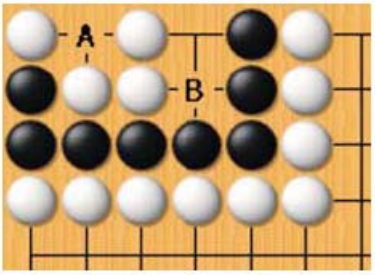

Diagram 5

In both cases, Black feels a heavier burden from the ko than White, so both are picnic kos for White. Besides, White doesn' t need to hurry in starting the ko by playing at B in Diagram 5; White can wait until when he can choose between the dual-life and the ko. White can also create ko threats before he starts the ko.

It takes time to end the ko, and hence its name, the thousand-year ko.

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Lesson 67 : Types of Ko (3)

As you' ve seen before, certain kos can be a big burden to one player and an enjoyment to the other, sometimes because of the size of the groups involved and sometimes because of the number of moves spent to win, as shown below.

Approach Move Ko

This is a type of ko where a player needs to spend one or more moves in order to fill the outside liberties of the opponent' s group before he is able to end the ko.

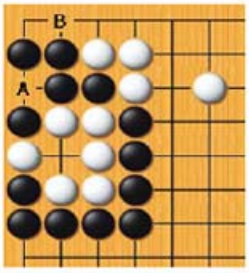

Diagram 1

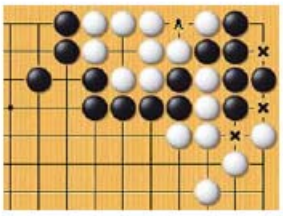

Diagram 2

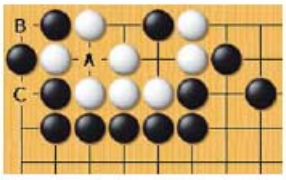

Diagram 3

Diagram 1 The ko at A is an example of a one-move approach ko for White, as he cannot end the ko by directly capturing and connecting, but should spend one more move to fill Black' s outside liberty at B.

Diagram 2 White cannot win the ko at A by connecting there, but he has to fill the three x-marked points before he can capture the black group. This kind of ko is called, as you may guess, a threemove approach ko. The problem is that it is very hard for White to win this ko.

To fill Black' s outside liberties, White should ignore several ko threats of Black or have many more ko threats than Black.

If he ignores the ko threats, he will suffer the loss caused by them, and even if he has many ko threats, Black can win the ko by ignoring only one ko threat. So, there is a saying that ' a three-move approach ko is not a ko.'

StepKo

This is a type of ko in which a player has to win a series of kos one after the other in order to win the whole situation.

Diagram 3 If it is Black' s turn, this will be an example of a two-step ko for White because it is not enough for him just to win the ko at A by connecting there; he should also win the ko at B to save the group. Meanwhile, Black can kill the group by winning a single ko at A.

On the other hand, if it is White' s turn, this will be a one-move approach ko for Black; Black cannot connect at B even if he wins the ko, but needs to spend one more move at C.

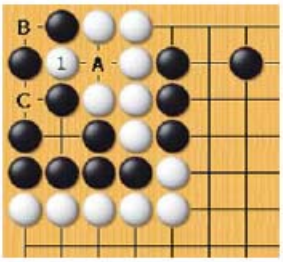

Diagram 4

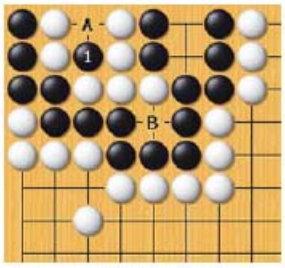

Diagram 5

Diagram 4 This is an example of a three-step ko for White since he has to win the three kos, A, B, and C, step by step, in order to win the whole situation.

RotationKo

This is an extraordinary situation which is not in a normal ko shape, but generates endless repetition.

Diagram 5 White cannot capture Black 1 with A because then Black will kill him by playing B.

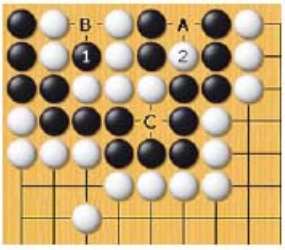

Diagram 6

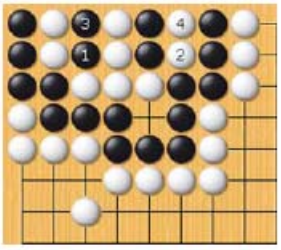

Diagram 7

Diagram 6 Therefore, White should play 2. Then, if Black captures it with A, White will play B, and the entire situation will become a dual-life because neither player can play C.

Diagram 7 But, if Black doesn't want a dual-life, he can capture the two stones with 3 and White will also capture the two black stones with 4 and the resulting situation will become almost the same as the one in Dia.5. Thus, the whole situation can be repeated and if both players refuse to stop the repetition, the game itself ends without a result.

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Lesson 68 : Key to Winning Ko

I hope that you are now more familiar with kos, having learned the previous lessons. Now it's time to learn how to win them in actual play.

Frankly speaking, there is no special technique to winning a ko. As you already know, the outcome of a ko is decided simply by the number ko threats.

In other words, if you have more ko threats than your opponent, you will win the ko or gain profit in exchange; if you have fewer ko threats, you will lose the ko or lose profit in exchange.

Does this sound too simple? Perhaps you would like some more rules to help you. Let's take a look.

1. If the opponent's group is heavier than your group, in other words, if the opponent stands to lose more from losing the ko, the situation is favorable for you. We've seen examples of this when we learned about the picnic ko.

2. It is difficult to find big ko threats during the opening stage. This is partially true because, in the opening, both players are usually occupying strategic points in turns so that it is hard to find a situation where one can strike a fatal blow with two consecutive moves.

However, it is also partially untrue since two consecutive moves can be as powerful as the moves capturing the opponent's group.

3. You should pay attention to the sequence so that you can be the first one to capture the ko. This sounds very natural since you can save at least one threat by doing so. However, to capture first is much better, because many kos are too big to win them by spending ko threats.

4. As we've learned in the previous lessons, some sentes are bad not only because they make the opponent's shape strong, erase potentials and fill the player's liberties, but also because they reduce the number of ko threats.

Even if there are no kos you can expect, it's always better to reserve ko threats for future use.

5. When playing ko threats, you'd better start with the smallest ko threat, then proceed to the bigger ones. In general, it is good to win anything at the smallest cost.

Also, as mentioned before, it is better to save the bigger threats for the time when a bigger ko happens. Only, take care of one thing. There are many players who experienced losing a ko because of playing a ko threat smaller than the ko. A ko threat shouldn't be smaller than the ko.

6. To win a ko is not the goal of Baduk. To play unfavorable ko threats leads to a defeat of the game even if one wins the ko.

The saying about bad sentes can be applied to bad ko threats as well. The following are examples of bad ko threats: if the ko threats cause a loss of territory or influence of the player, if they help the opponent become stronger, if they reduce the number of liberties of the player and if they eliminate the opponent's weakness.

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Lesson 69 : Invasion & Defense Part (1)

"Baduk is a game of harmony," stated the famous master Go Seigen. However, this does not mean that a player lets his opponent do whatever he wants in peace, just minding his own business. In order to achieve real harmony, you have to struggle sometimes to keep the balance in territory, influence, power, etc. In this process, there are times when one invades, and the other defends.

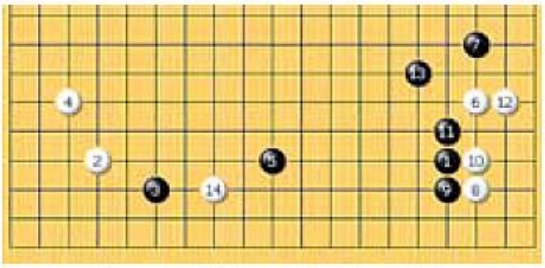

Diagram 1

When your opponent invades, normally you would have more stones in the locale. However, a larger number of stones does not guarantee that you can capture the opponent's invading stones. If he plays in the proper way, you can only expect to gain some profit from attacking those stones.

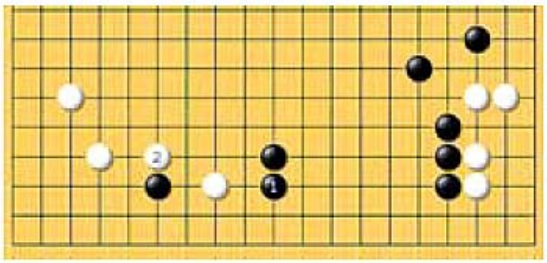

Diagram 2

Then, what is the profit you can expect? Lucky for beginners, there are often-seen situations in games where the moves of the invading and defending sides are already decided, much like the joseki sequences. Let us look at some educational examples.

Diagram 1 This diagram shows half a board and the numbers on the stones are arbitrarily assigned. However, you will encounter similar situations many times in your games, as Black and also as White. Here, Black wants to make territory on the lower side and White tries to prevent it by invading at 14. What would be the correct answer for Black, and what he can expect from attacking White 14?

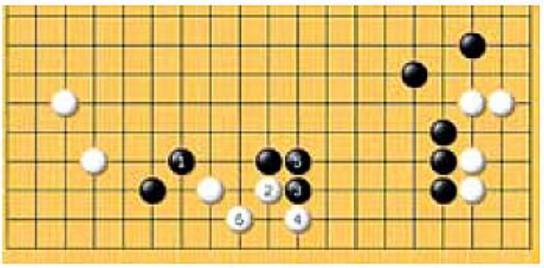

Diagram 3

Diagram 2 If this is a handicap game, Black 1 can be a moderate choice. But, if it is an even game, Black 1 is too defensive. By playing at 2, it is White who controls the situation rather than Black.

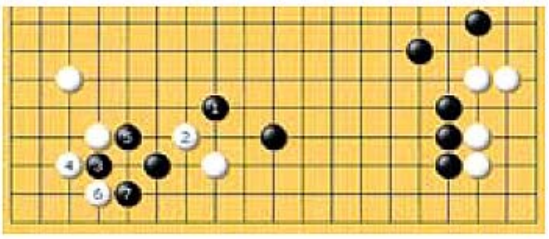

Diagram 4

Diagram 3 If Black's shape in the right corner is bigger than here, Black 1 can be a good move. But when the corner is already taken by White, and the territory Black can expect on the side is not so big, it is not a good choice. While White easily survives on the side up to 6, the black stones surrounding the white stones are not very strong.

Diagram 4 The capping move at 1 can be a clever way of attacking if White comes out with 2 as Black expects. Then, Black can put White in trouble by attacking both the white stones on the side and in the corner. The problem is the fact that this is just what Black wants.

Diagram 5 Against Black 1, playing White 2 and 4 _ tried first by Lee Changho 9 dan _ is a brilliant way to avoid trouble. Descending at 4, White can either bridge under with A or make a living with B, and both results are not good for Black.

Diagram 6 To conclude, Black 1 is the best move for Black. Although White can still easily live on the side up to 12, the outside wall of Black is much

stronger here than in Dia.3 or Dia.5. Also, the left corner of White is weaker than before. Moreover, Black can use A, B, or C as a sente.

Diagram 7 The result in Dia.6 is also the best for White. If White tries to connect with 4 and 6, Black will sacrifice some stones as shown and make a far stronger influence to the center. This is obviously better for Black.

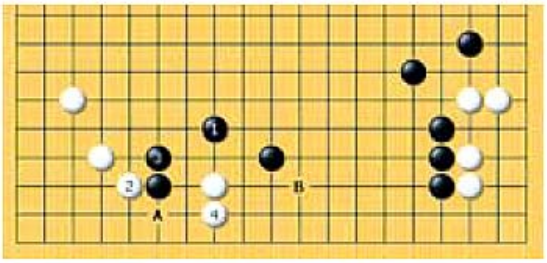

Diagram 5

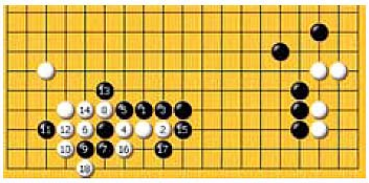

Diagram 7

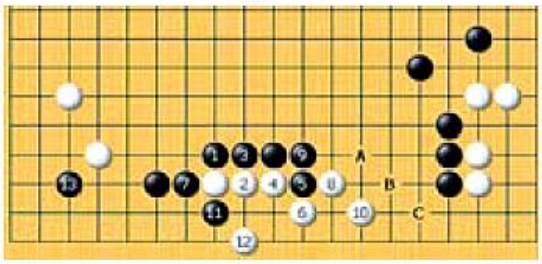

Diagram 6

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Lesson 70 : Invasion & Defense Part (2)

As you may have already inferred from the last lesson, how to answer an opponent's invasion changes according to the surrounding situation: you can put all your power in attacking the invading stones when they are the only objects you can possibly attack; or, you can let them live and take a different profit from the attack. In both cases, the first thing you should do is to examine the circumstances.

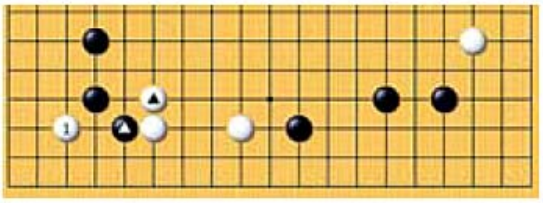

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 When there is the exchange of ▲s, the 3-3 point in the corner is a weak point. In this situation, Black cannot influence whether or not White lives, but can only control how White chooses to survive.

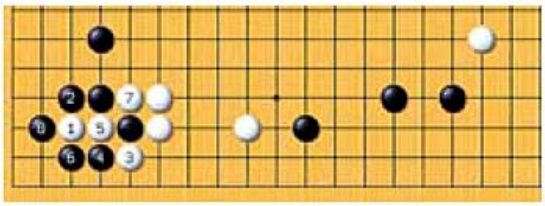

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 To keep the corner territory from 2 to 8 can be a way to cope with White's invasion, but not in this situation. The three white stones on the side in Dia.1 are not strong enough to live by themselves and need more attention. But here, they are strong enough to be free from worry even in sente up to 7, and this is not the best result Black can expect.

Diagram 3 Black 4 does not change the result by much. Here also, white stones on the side are not in danger any more, and the corner is not perfectly in Black's possession either.

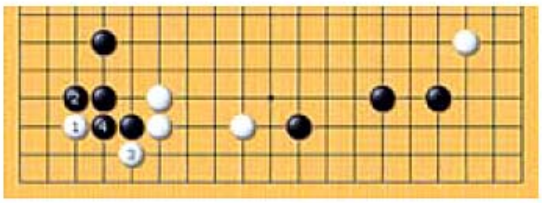

Diagram 3

Diagram 4 When the three white stones on the lower side are not strong as here, Black should block the connection between the three stones and the invading stone by descending at 2. Since there is enough room, it is not difficult for White to live in the corner. However, it is inevitable for him to play moves that strengthen Black's wall outside, and this is what Black expected when letting White live in his territory up to 17.

As you can see, it would be very hard for White to save the three white stones on the side.

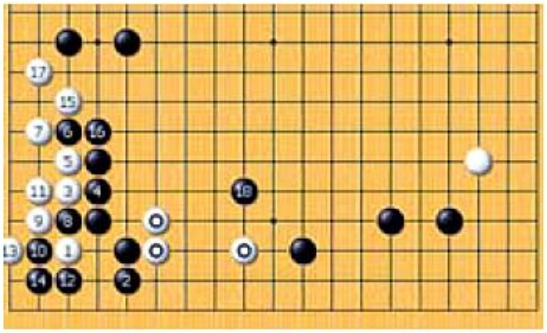

Diagram 4

Diagram 5 Here, it is not that helpful for White to live, even if it tries to prevent strengthening Black's stones by not touching Black's stones too much.

Up to 8, Black's influence on the left is still powerful enough to threaten the life of the three white stones.

Diagram 6 However, when there is nothing else to attack except the invading stone, you have to think differently. Here, White invades into Black's territory at 1, but the four white stones in the corner are strong enough so that Black cannot harass them by blocking the connection.

Diagram 7 In this case, you can just let White go under in the sequence shown here, and gain a well-built outside wall instead. During the sequence, Black 2 is a good move to strengthen Black's wall by making White answer at 3. If White plays elsewhere, for example at 9 to connect faster, Black will cut at 3 and the connection of White will be at stake instead.

Diagram 8 If you don't like the peaceful but somewhat lukewarm result of Dia.7, you can prevent the connection with 2 and start attacking. However, this is not a one-sided attack as Black's attacks in Dia.4 and Dia.5. Actually, it should be called a 'fight' rather than an 'attack' since the black group to the left is also disconnected from his ally and is weak.

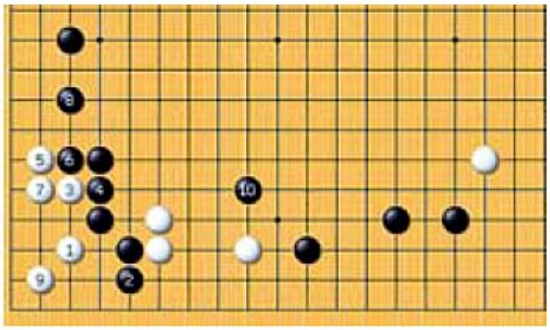

Diagram 5

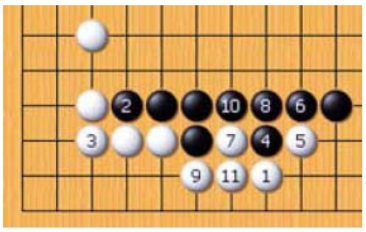

Diagram 7

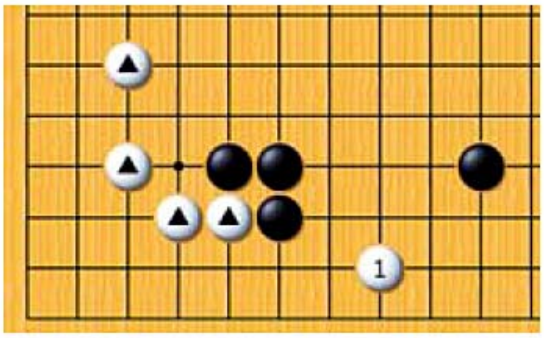

Diagram 6

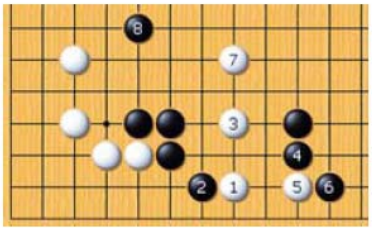

Diagram 8

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Lesson 71: Invasion & Defense Part (3)

The harmony I mentioned in the previous lessons should be your goal during all phases of the game of Baduk. You need harmony in territory and influence, you need harmony in the shape of stones, you need harmony between the move you're playing and the moves that have already beeb played, etc. Even when you invade your opponent's territory, you still need to consider the harmony between the strategy you are going to choose for the invasion and the overall situation.

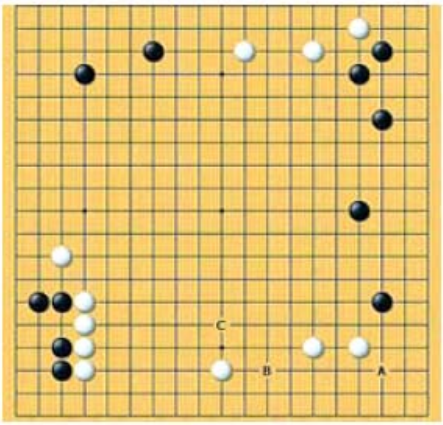

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 On the lower side of the board, there is a huge territorial framework for White. Of course the territory is not yet settled there, and moves that can reduce the size of the framework, such as A, B, and C, remain. However, Black's next move is not easy to determine.

Although there are not that many moves played on the board, there are still many things Black has to consider.

Diagram 2 It is obviously not good for Black to come into the corner at the 3-3 point. Even though he takes the corner territory from White, White's framework on the side becomes far larger than before with 8 and 10. Therefore, A is not the answer.

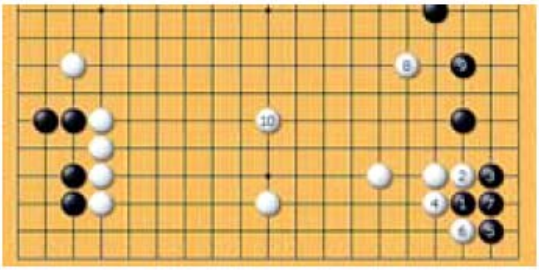
Diagram 2

Diagram 3 Then what about invading right into the side? It is not difficult at all for Black to live on the side with the sequence shown here. But, a problem follows. Since his influence on the side becomes far stronger than before, White will want to take back as much as, or even more than Black has got on the lower side, by invading at 14. So, B is not the answer either.

Diagram 4 So, Black 1 here is the correct choice. The sequence up to 7 is the simplest and will yield the best result for Black. It doesn't hurt any of Black's stones nor does it strengthen White's shape. White's territory on the side can look big but actually isn't, because Black can still invade into the right corner at A.

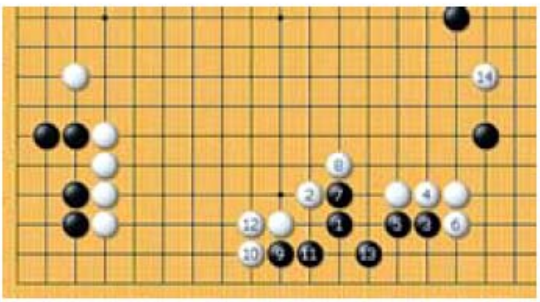
Diagram 3

Diagram 5 White 2 can be another answer for White to secure the territory.

If Black wants to further reduce the territory, he can attach at A and cut at C against White's bend at B. However, it is enough for Black to let White have territory as shown, if he doesn't want to fight. As explained in Dia.4, White's territory on the side is not very big.

Diagram 6 The same thing can be said when White answers with a knight's move to the left as shown. It is good enough for Black to jump at 3 and keep sente by forcing White to answer at A. If White plays elsewhere, then Black can attach at B and start a fight that is favorable for Black, owing to the support of Black 3.

Diagram 7 It is too dangerous for White to attack Black with 2 to 6. If Black continues escaping toward the right side, then this kind of attack can work for White. However, if Black just succeeds in living on the lower side with 7, which is very easy, White would have only the worthless cover outside.

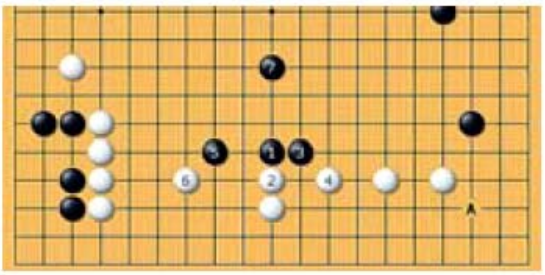

Diagram 4

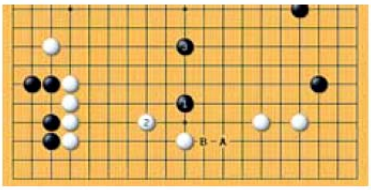

Diagram 6

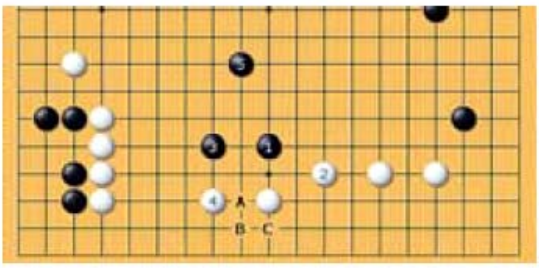

Diagram 5

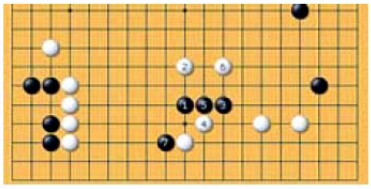

Diagram 7

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Lesson 72 : Sacrifice Part (1)

There is a Baduk book entitled "To Win, Sacrifice." The author of this book, the late Imm Sung-eun 9 dan, the former secretary general of the Korean Baduk Association, said that although sacrificing stones doesn't assure a victory, players can feel pleasure in playing Baduk when they learn how to sacrifice stones with delight.

In the case of most beginners, they feel a great happiness when they capture the opponent's stones, and sad when their own stones are killed. These beginners will wonder why we have to learn a way to sacrifice our stones. However, you should know that there is bigger happiness waiting for you if you sacrifice your stones for a higher purpose in the proper way; this is the topic of this lesson.

Meaning of Sacrifice

To sacrifice a stone means to intentionally let a stone or stones be killed by the opponent. Then, what could be the intention for the sacrifice? There are several possible intentions, such as to build a stronger position, to gain an influence, etc.

Diagram 1 To attach and cut is one of the most frequently used methods to strengthen your position. White 3 here is a sacrifice, played when it becomes obvious that Black can capture it with A.

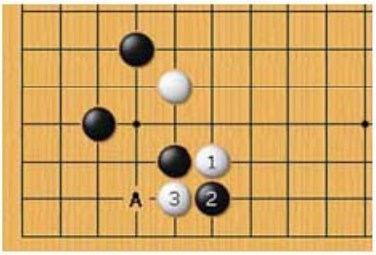

Diagram 1

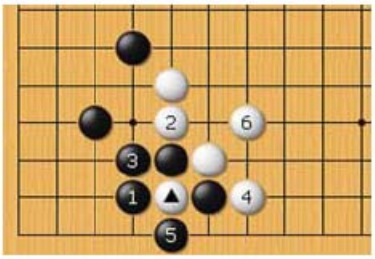

Diagram 2

Diagram 2 Owing to the sacrifice, White can play two sente moves at 2 and 4, and make a strong shape up to 6. This result is worth the sacrifice of one stone at ▲.

Diagram 3 Another valuable sacrifice could be if you give up some stones you can save in order to gain a better result. Let's imagine that Black cuts at 1 and threatens the life of two ▲-marked white stones. What do you think White should do?

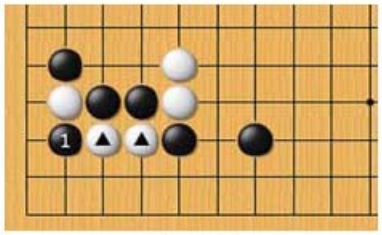

Diagram 3

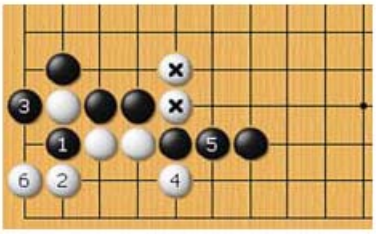

Diagram 4

Diagram 4 Actually, it is not so difficult for White to save the two stones in the corner. With two simple ataris at 2 and 4 and one descending move at 6, White can stay alive within the corner. However, now the initiative in the center goes to Black, and the two x-marked white stones become just a weak group between two stronger groups of Black.

Diagram 5 On the other hand, if White decides to sacrifice the two stones in the corner, he can improve the situation far better. Here, White makes two ataris with 2 and 4 using the sacrificed stone to the left, and separates Black with 6 and 8 also in sente, giving up the two stones in the corner. Now it is White who has the initiative in the center up to 12, and the ▲-marked black stone becomes helpless.

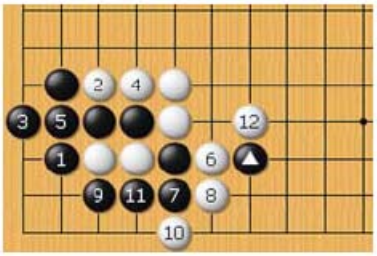

Diagram 5

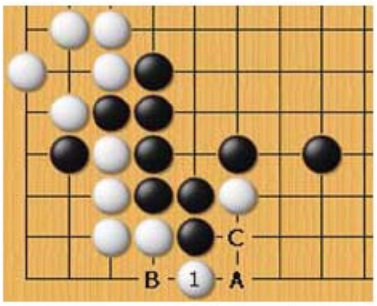

Diagram 6

Diagram 6 The sacrifice method is also frequently used in endgame. When White bends at 1, the simplest way for Black to answer it is A. Then, White B and Black C will close the situation. But, there is a better way for Black.

Diagram 7 Black 2 is a good move here. It is impossible for White to come out at 3and 5 because he cannot play at 2 against Black's atari at 8. If he connects there, the whole White group on the side will be killed by Black A.

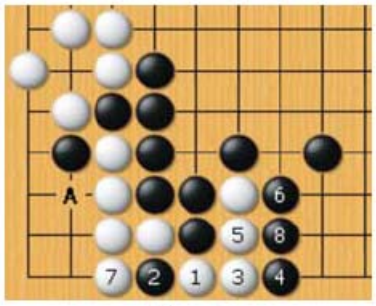

Diagram 7

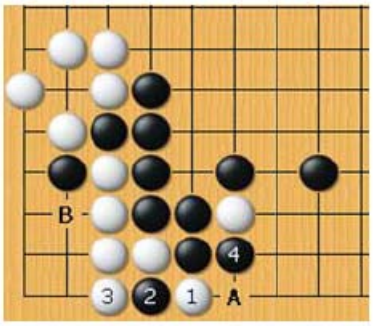

Diagram 8

Diagram 8 Therefore, this is the usual result we can expect. Black succeeds in making White's territory one point less than when he just answers with A.

Please verify this yourselves. It is impossible for White to push at A after Black 4, because of B.

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Lesson 73 : Sacrifice Part (2)

"Win the stones, lose the game." This proverb reveals the truth that stones are just the tools, not the ultimate goal of Baduk. There is another one that says the same thing, "sacrifice a little to win big." But it is one thing to be prepared to sacrifice stones, and another to know how to do it right. Let's look at some sacrificial techniques in this lesson.

"If one stone on the 3rd line is in atari, add a second stone and sacrifice both." This is a very useful saying to give you a technical hint on sacrificing.

Diagram 1 Here, Black 3 is a stone on the 3rd line in atari. Since you know the saying above, you know what to do next as Black.

Diagram 2 Black 1 is the right move. Black can then play 5 and 7 in sente as well as the atari at 3.

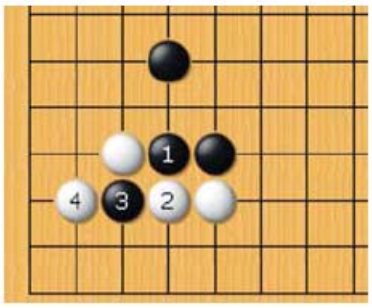

Diagram 1

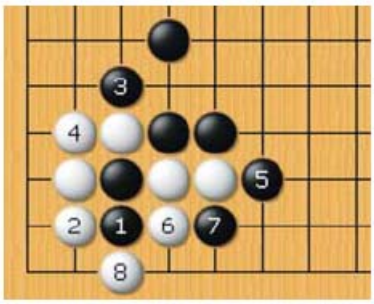

Diagram 2

Diagram 3 You can definitely feel the effect of sacrifice by comparing this with Dia.2. Now, Black defends the left side by playing atari, but cannot block the lower side. Similarly, making a larger sacrifice is a good technique.

Diagram 4 When White cuts at 1, it would be somewhat dangerous to save the ▲-marked black stone with 2. The main issue in hand is the method of sacrificing this stone, as you know.

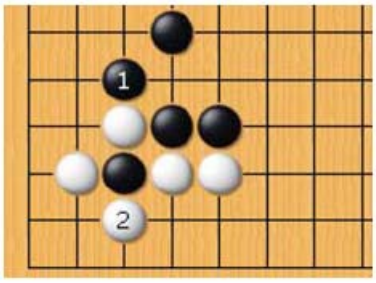

Diagram 3

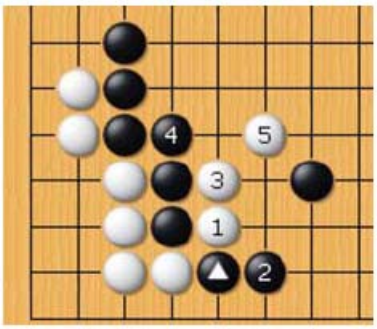

Diagram 4

Diagram 5 However, it is not the best way to simply give up the ¡a-marked stone with 2 and 4, because Black cannot have control of the lower side. By the way, White 5 is a good move in this situation.

If White is overjoyed by capturing the black stone with A, Black can easily cover him by attaching at 5.

Diagram 6 In this case, Black 4, which enlarges the victim by one more stone, is a good move. Thanks to this, Black succeeds in blocking the outside completely, even in sente.

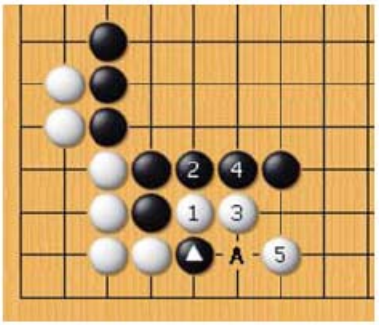

Diagram 5

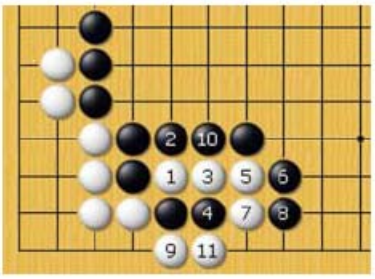

Diagram 6

Sacrificing tactics are also used to lessen the liberties or eye shape of the opponent's stones. This kind of technique in particular is called a 'throwin.'

Diagram 7 The five ▲-marked stones seem to be captured by White, but are actually not. Using the sacrificing method, Black can save them without any damage.

Diagram 8 To make a ko is not the optimal solution. By the way, if White connects at A instead of starting a ko with 2, Black will link by playing at 2.

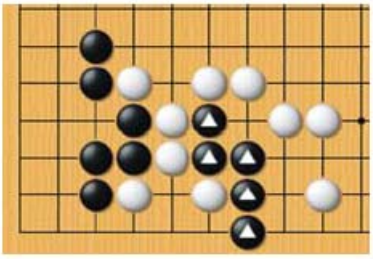

Diagram 7

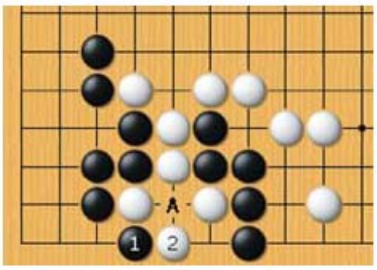

Diagram 8

Diagram 9 As you may expect, 1 is the correct move here. If White connects at 3 against Black 1, Black will just link up by playing at 2. So, White plays 2 and then Black 3 is the finishing blow. It may look ridiculous to head into death like this; however, White's capture with A is actually what Black wants.

Diagram 10 The sequence up to 4 shows why Black didn't worry about letting his stones be killed. After White's capture, Black 2 is another small sacrifice that finishes the situation. By move 4, now it is White who is dead.

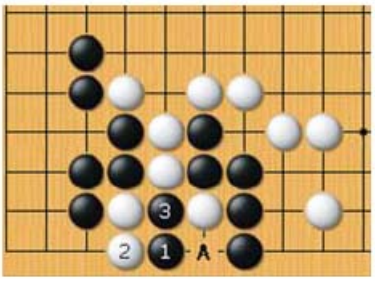

Diagram 9

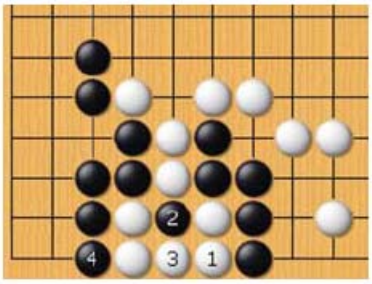

Diagram 10

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Lesson 74 : Direction of Movement Part (1)

The Baduk board is like an ocean, too vast for novice sailors to cope with. Since there are so many possible ways to go, it is almost impossible to decide where to go. You may hold the key, and even know how to handle it, but if you don't have a marine chart, buoys, or a lighthouse, you can still become easily lost. So, let's look at some possible aids for deciding the direction of movement of your stones.

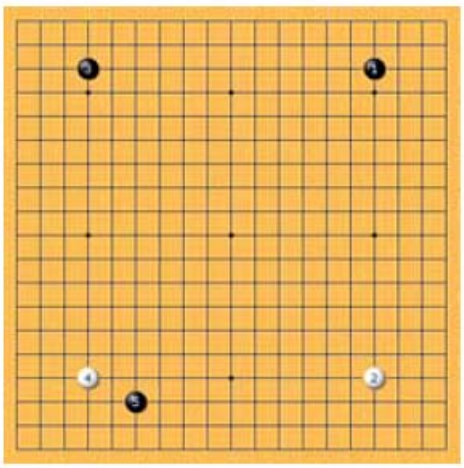

Diagram 1

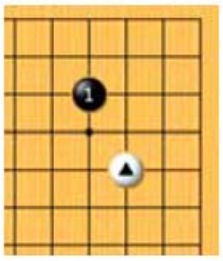

Diagram 2

Diagram 3

Diagram 1 This is the very beginning of a game played by two 10-kyu players. Black is seated on the lower side. Even though there are only three moves by Black, there is the same number of mistakes.

How Black 1 can be a mistake might be a mystery to you, but it is a break with convention. You may already know of the custom where Black shouldn't play the first move on his opponent's lower right corner. This is to allow your opponent to play the corner easily with his right hand, although this doesn't make much sense when you are playing a left-handed opponent. Due to the same reason, Black 1 in this diagram is not allowed as the first move, since it makes White approach from the farther side as shown in Diagram 2. Because the first move has no effect on the situation that follows, it is better not to play a first move out of convention, and therefore Black 1 should be played as shown in Diagram 3.

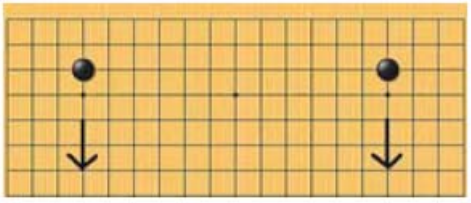

Diagram 4

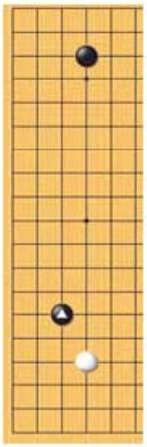

Diagram 5

The reason why Black 3 is a mistake is much more obvious. Actually there are two reasons. One is that the two stones, Black 1 and 3 are on the same 3rd line.

As you already know, the 3rd line is for getting territorial profit, and the two stones here are aimed at making territory just on the upper side. Also, which line the stones occupy is usually quite important, but their location here is not very significant.

The other reason is closely related the topic of this lesson. The stones on the 3-4 points have developing potential only toward the direction in which the arrows of Diagram 4 are pointing. In short, the two stones shown here are doing the same thing and limit the efficiency of movement when there are a lot more things to do. Therefore, Black should play the other 3-4 point in the corner if he wants to play the 3-4 point there.

Black's third mistake is the direction of the approach, namely Black 5. Owing to Black 3, Black should now develop the left side, and the approach must be from the other side like the ▲-marked stone in Diagram 5. Let's compare this to the sequence actually played in the game.

Diagram 6 This is the real game sequence. As you see, White now dominates the left side by approaching at 10, which Black had intended to develop.

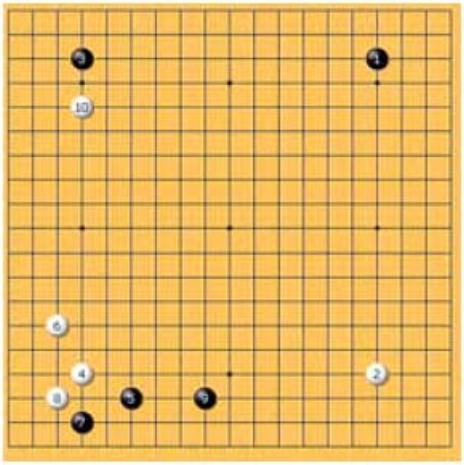

Diagram 6

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Lesson 75 : Direction of Movement Part (2)

You may know that strong players improve their skills by reviewing a game after it is played, exchanging their opinions on the various moves. It is not a difficult task for the strong players to remember the entire sequence of a game perfectly without a game record at hand.

It is not unusual for professional players to be able to replay more than 100 games perfectly from memory. The reason why this kind of reviewing is possible is that there is a meaning for every move, and the stones are all connected by an understandable purpose.

However, when I watch the games of kyu-level players, I often find that it is much harder for them to remember the sequence of their games than it is for the strong players. There is hardly any meaningful track of moves to follow. The movements of stones are not decided according to the context of the whole board. This lack of perceptible meaning makes the weak players unable to review their games without record on paper, which hinders them from becoming stronger. This is a pity, and I hope that knowledge of the correct direction of movement helps you find a path to follow.

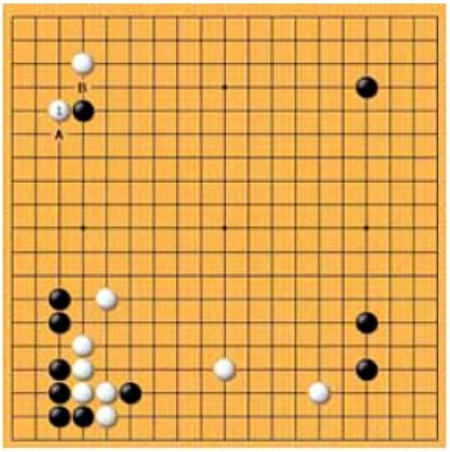

Diagram 1

Diagram 1 White answers Black's approach with 1. Now, Black has two choices for answering this attachment, A or B. Usually the answer is up to the player's choice, but when there are stones already on the board, the player should take the circumstances into account.

Diagram 2 Let's assume that Black chooses the left side and plays out the famous joseki up to 6. He can make a territory on that side, but as you know, the side has been his even before he reached this result by the help of two △- marked black stones, and his gain doesn't amount to much. In addition, the left side is limited in its possibility of future growth by the ○-marked white stone. What is worse is that now it is White's turn to play, and he erases the influence that Black established on the right side by dividing it with 7.

Diagram 3 Therefore, the correct answer is Black 2 in this diagram. After playing the simplest joseki in the corner, it is Black's turn to play 8. Compared with Diagram 2, now Black can develop the right side as well as the upper side.

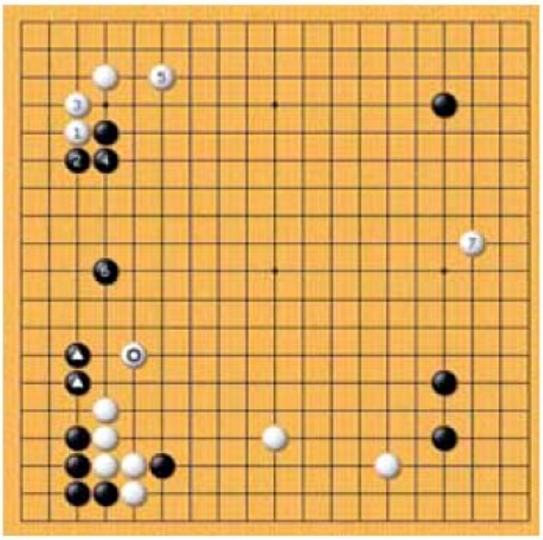

Diagram 2

Since White's territory in the upper left corner is as big as Black's territory in the lower left corner, Black's scale of influence set up along the upper and the right side is much bigger than that of White on the lower side. So, Black still keeps the advantage of playing first.

Going back to Diagram 1, choosing between A and B is not difficult. Owing to the two △-marked black stones located on the 3rd line, the line of profit, and also the ○-marked white stone limiting its growth, the possible scale of influence Black can develop on the left side is not that big. In this case, it is good for Black to make the side worthless for both players by choosing a joseki that emphasizes the other side, and then move on to develop it.

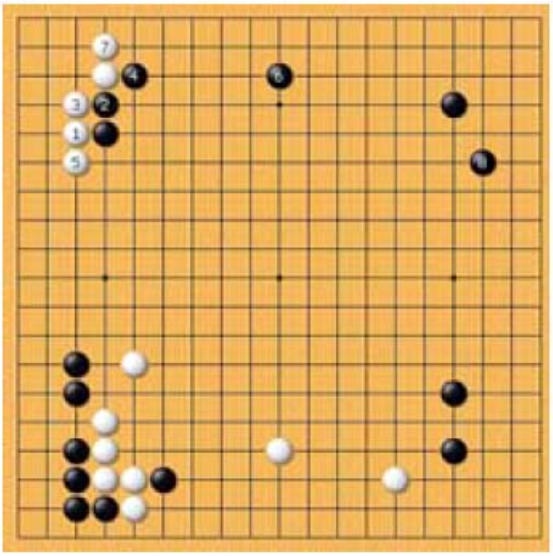

Diagram 3

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Lesson 76 : Direction of Movement Part (3)

When you go shopping, you may find that the more things you see, the more difficult it is to choose just one item. Life is a continuous series of decision making, but sometimes even choosing the color of your socks is not easy. The same is true in Baduk games. However, the good thing is that if you look around carefully, you can find some clues to help you decide your move.

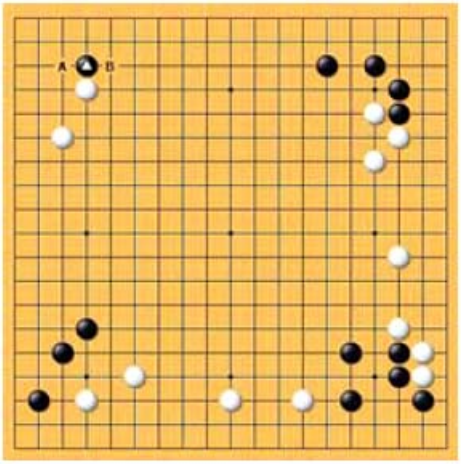

Diagram 1

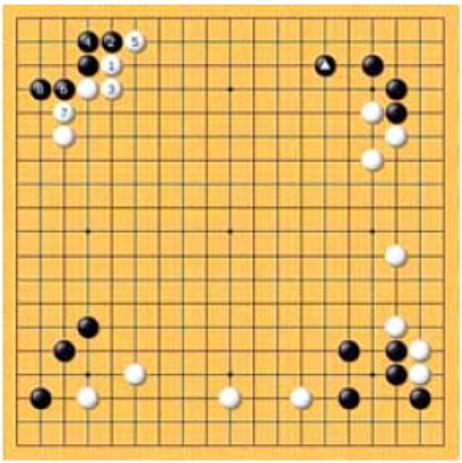

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 After playing out three josekis in three corners, Black attaches at the △-marked point. There are only two possible moves that White can choose from. As you may know, A is for making territory in the corner, and B is to make a wall outside. Which one will you choose?

Diagram 2 If you answered ' B' , you' re wrong. The moves up to 8 are a normal sequence following White 1. Black obtains the territory in the corner and he succeeds in building up influence in the upper left side as he intended. The problem is that this influence is restricted a lot by the black group in the upper right corner. Usually, influence needs a victim to attack, but this black group is perfectly safe. In addition, the ¡a-marked stone on the 3rd line prohibits White from developing the upper side.

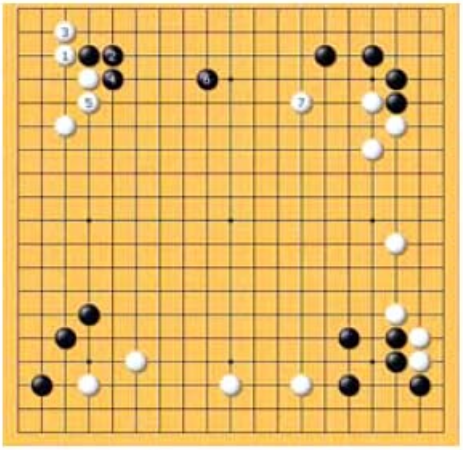

Diagram 3

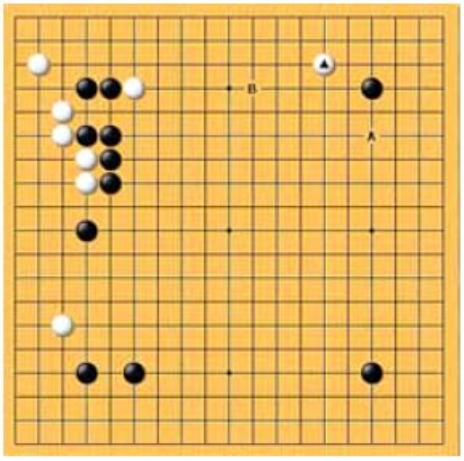

Diagram 4

Diagram 3 Therefore, in this case, it is better for White to keep the corner for himself and let Black have the side. Black' s territory on the upper side may look large, but it is actually not. The territory in the upper right corner has been Black' s before the sequence up to 6, but Black has to answer White 7 if he wants to make sure of ownership. This will allow White to develop the right side by playing another move there.

Diagram 4 This position may be simpler than the previous one for you to figure out. White makes the approach with the ¡a-marked stone, and now it is Black' s turn to play. Consider that Black' s wall to the left is quite strong.

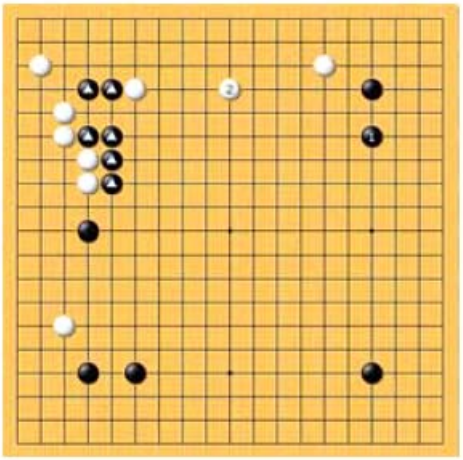

Diagram 5

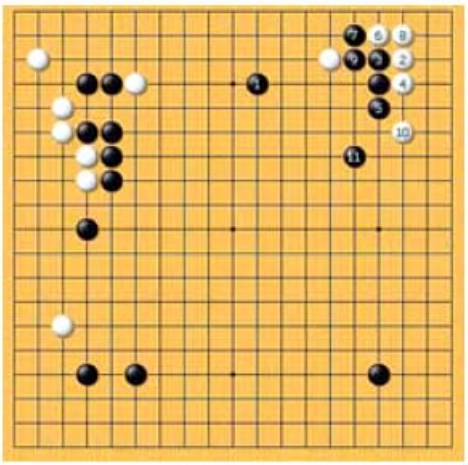

Diagram 6

Diagram 5 Obviously A, Black 1 here, is not the answer. As you see, by White' s extension at 2, the △-marked Black' s wall becomes a group of stones that has no power to affect other groups or to make territory.

Diagram 6 Therefore, Black should attack the approaching stone with a pincer at 1. The sequence up to 11 is exactly what Black wanted to do. Compared to the hopeless group of stones in Diagram. 5, Black' s wall to the left is really strong and powerful in accordance with the influence to the right.

It is natural that answering questions like those you' ve seen above is easy, because the meaning of the questions is very clear and there aren' t many options. In a real game, however, to analyze the situation correctly and to narrow the possible choices are not that simple. The key is to look around carefully, as I mentioned in the beginning; the answer will then make itself known.

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Lesson 77 : Direction of Movement part (4)

An attack is not just an action to harass the opponent, but an action to make profit. Your stones are relatively stronger than your opponent's when you attack your opponent, so it is easy enough to gain profit, but to maximize the amount of profit is quite something else. The direction you take will have a substantial effect on the amount of profit you make from the attack.

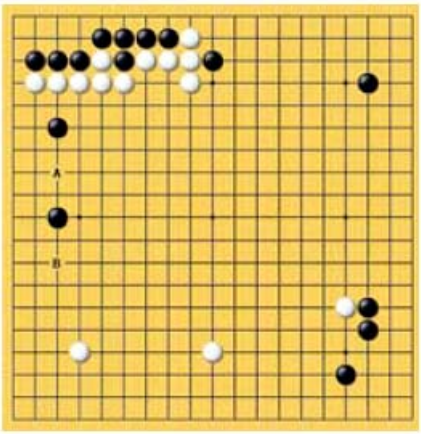

Diagram 1

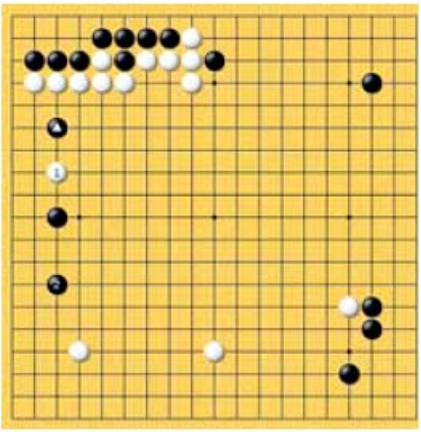

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 In the upper left area, White has built a powerful wall that threatens the two black stones on the left side. To make the most of the influence, which one should White play, A or B?

Diagram 2 To separate the stones on the side is a normal way to attack, as you can see with White 1. Since the White wall is so strong, Black should give up trying saving the ¡a-marked stone, and look instead to save another stone with Black 2. However, White cannot be satisfied with capturing just one stone. White's influence in this area deserves more.

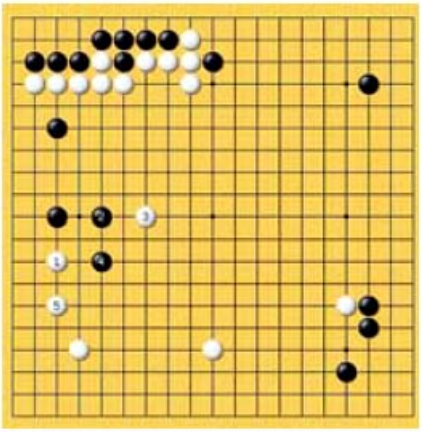

Diagram 3

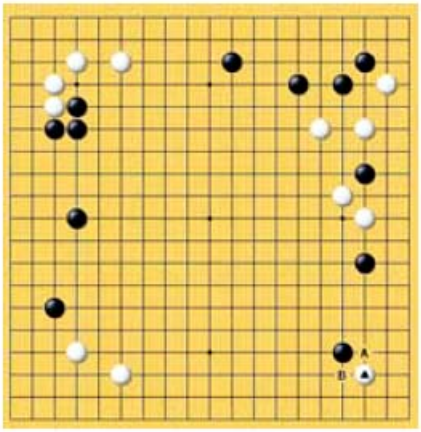

Diagram 4

Diagram 3 When capturing a part of the opponent's stones is not profitable enough to match the size of your influence, you'd better think of attacking the stones as a group. By forcing the opponent's stones to hold their fate in common (with 1), White can make profit on the left side (with 5), and keep the influence in the center (with 3) at the same time.

Diagram 4 When White comes in at the 3-3 point with the ▲-marked stone, it is impossible for Black to capture it. However, Black can decide which side he will develop, between the left and the right, by attacking the white stone.

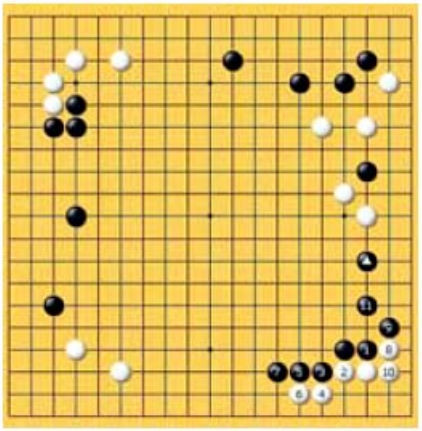

Diagram 5

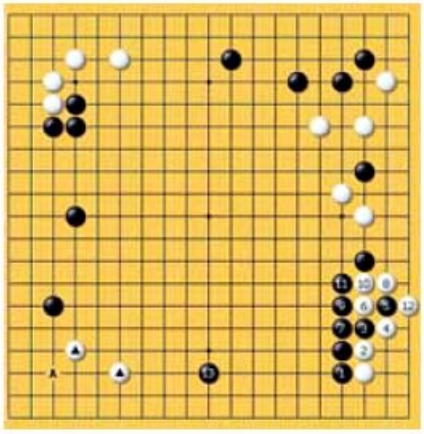

Diagram 6

Diagram 5 If Black blocks with A in Diagram 4, the sequence up to 11 is mandatory. The problem with the result of this sequence is the narrow distance between Black' s influence and the ¡amarked black stone. It cannot be said that Black' s influence is fully utilized.

Diagram 6 Therefore, Black should block with B in Diagram 4. Black 13 is properly extended from the wall to the right, and there is potential remaining in the lower left corner to attack the two ▲-marked white stones by playing A.

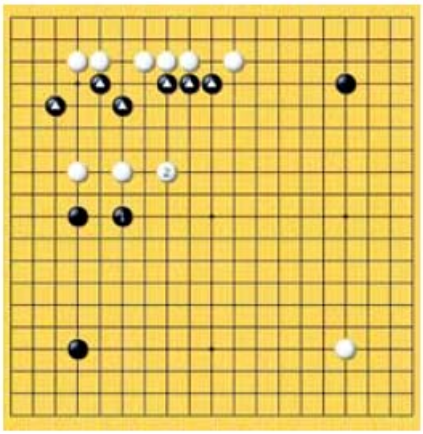

Diagram 7

Diagram 7 After White' s pincer at 1, the sequence up to 13 is a joseki variation. Since Black has been building up a wall through 2 to 10, now it' s time to attack White 1 in return and profit from it. Black 12 is a move to prevent White from having a base on the side. Then, which one between A and B is the correct move for Black' s next attack?

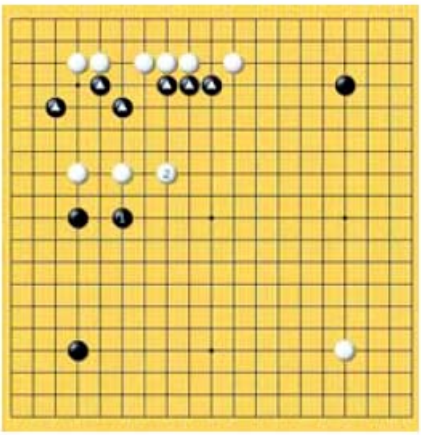

Diagram 8

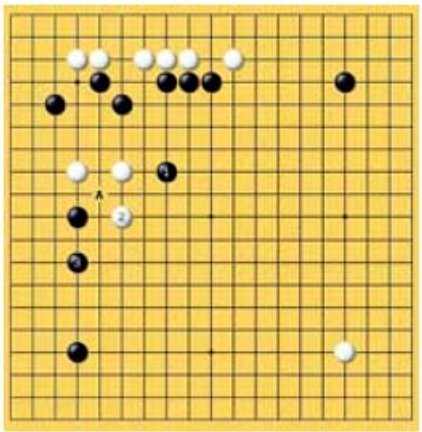

Diagram 9

Diagram 8 Black 1 here is not the answer. It helps Black to develop the left side. However, the damage it does to the ¡a-marked black group is huge, and cannot be compensated by the profit taken from the left side. Now it is hardly possible to say which side is attacking.

Diagram 9 Black 1, on the other hand, maintains the influence of the black group in the upper area, and also lets Black secure territory on the left side.

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Lesson 78 : Becoming a Professional Player in Korea

During 60 years of professional baduk history in Korea, there have only been about 210 professional players.

Only 35 of them were female. As in other sports, becoming a professional baduk player means taking a long and difficult road.

In Korea, a certified student who studies baduk at Hankuk Kiwon (Korea baduk Association) seeking to become a professional player is called a yongusaeng. At any time in the yongusaeng league, there are 120 boys divided into 10 classes and 48 girls divided into four classes, class 1 being the strongest (for both the boys and girls) and 10 the weakest (4 for girls).

Certified students participate in a Baduk tournament to win a place as a professional player. The tournament, organized by Hankuk Kiwon (Korea Baduk Association), takes place every month. /Courtesy of the Korea Baduk Association

A tournament among the yongusaeng takes place every month, and classes are reorganized each time according to the results. The top four players of each class will move up to the next class, while the worst four will be demoted to a lower class. When a new yongusaeng joins the league, he or she will get the lowest position in the weakest class to start with, regardless of his/her strength.

A qualification tournament to select new yongusaeng takes place every four months. To be selected, an applicant must be under the age of 18 and be in the top 12 of the hundreds of players participating in the qualification tournament.

Every month, four of these newcomers have the honor of joining the weakest yongusaeng class in place of the students cut in the monthly yongusaeng tournament. All 12 new students are incorporated into the yongusaeng classes, four at a time, over three months.

The competition among all the yongusaeng _ including the lowest ranked newcomers _ to join a higher class and not to be kicked out of the league, is incredibly intense. During week, when there are no league games, the yongusaeng spend most of their time studying baduk. They replay the professional games, review their own games from the yongusaeng league, study new joseki variations, solve life and death problems and play other yongusaeng.

Some of the yongusaeng, whose ages range from eight to 18, even give up regular education to have more time to study the game. They study baduk from morning to night, except for a little exercise during the day to keep their health.

There are about 15 private baduk academies in Korea (otherwise known as baduk tojang), with between 10 to 20 yongusaeng. Most of the teachers at these private academies are professional players, and they play teaching games and review them with their students.

Each academy also has other students who aspire to join their ranks of the yongusaeng. Their number ranges from 50 to 150. That means there are more than 1,000 students at any given time who want to become yongusaeng.

However, the number of players who are able to go professional is very small. The number of newly made professional players differs each year according to the situation of the Korean baduk scene, but it is always less than ten.

In recent years, new professional players were born in the following manner.

The three players with the highest scores in the yongusaeng tournament, and five who qualified in the annual professional qualification tournament become professional players. Since a student older than 18 cannot stay a yongusaeng, a player over that age is technically barred from becoming a professional player.

The fiercer the competition, the more miserable the students who do not succeed by the time they turn 18. Most of them develop future careers that have something to do with baduk because they love the game so much.

However, even for those few students who are able to go professional, there is still a long and difficult way to go, for the competition becomes even more cutthroat once they enter the professional baduk world.

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Lesson 79 : Ladders and Nets Part (1)

In the early stages of this series, you learned the ladder and the net as basic techniques for capturing your opponent's stones. Like the proverb, 'don't play baduk without knowing the ladder,' these two techniques are crucial for beginners to learn. Although they are basic and easy skills to learn, to use them in an effective manner is not a simple task. Since these two are often used in combination, let's study them together.

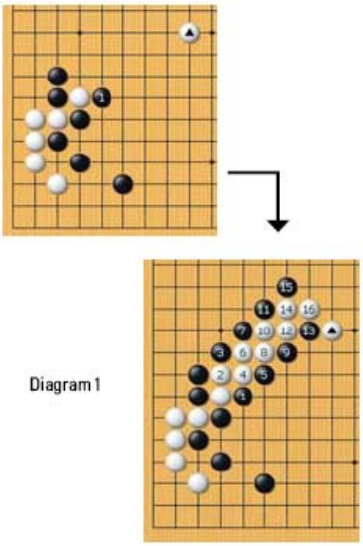


Diagram 1

Diagram 1 This is an example to remind you of the ladder and the ladder break. Black 1 tries to capture one white stone with a ladder, but this attempt is frustrated by the ladder break of the ▲-marked white stone, which gives atari to Black 13.

Diagram 2 It is necessary for Black to capture the ▲-marked white stone to save the three ○-marked black stones on the side. However, Black cannot do it by trying a simple ladder from 1 to 7 because of the x-marked ladder break. Diagram 3 In this case, Black should contrive a different type of ladder that is called a 'loose ladder.' Black 3 is the move starting a loose ladder chase. The way it drives the enemy to a dead-end is very similar to a normal ladder, but as you can see, it doesn't give atari continuously. It is more like a net that blocks the way out.

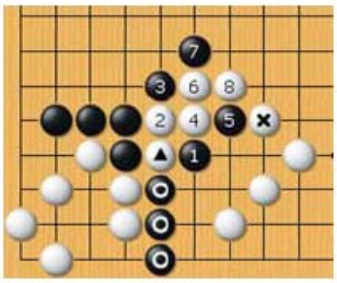


Diagram 2

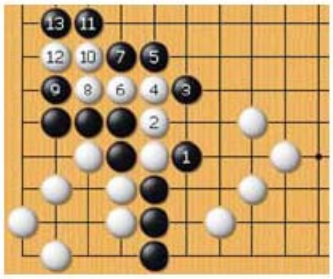
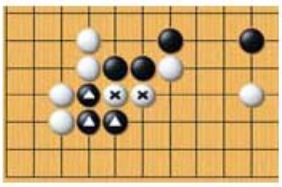


Diagram 3

Diagram 4 Sometimes, there happens a situation where an atari cannot stop a ladder. Here, Black should capture the two xmarked white stones in order to save the three ¡a-marked black stones. However, as shown in the next diagram, Black 1 gets to be in Atari while playing a ladder. Then, should Black give up saving the three △- marked stones?

Diagram 5 No, it is still possible to save them. In this case, Black should keep on playing the ladder regardless of the atari. If White takes the black stone in atari with A instead of going out with 2 or 4 of the first diagram, Black will give atari with 2 or 4 and then play B. The next diagram shows what will happen after the capturing the black stone in atari.



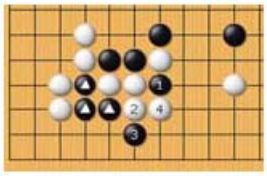


Diagram 4

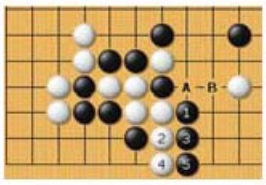


Diagram 5

Diagram 6 There is a way to avoid an atari by changing the order of moves. It is obvious that the x-marked white stone will be in atari if White starts a ladder directly by playing atari with A and letting the three △-marked black stones go out with B.

Diagram 7 However, if White plays 1, making Black answer with 2, under threat of losing the other three △-marked stones, it is now okay for White to start the ladder with 3.

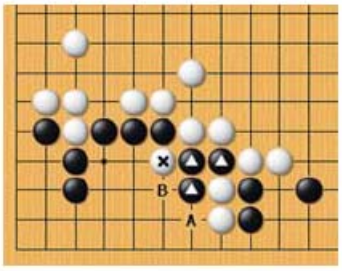


Diagram 6

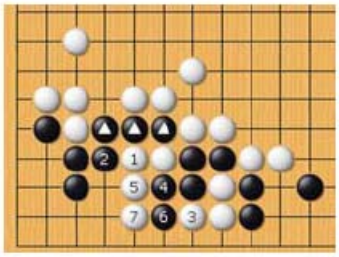


Diagram 7

Diagram 8 It is also possible to nullify the opponent' s ladder break. The two ¡amarked black stones are ladder breaks against the ladder with White A.

Diagram 9 In this case, White 1 is a move to enable the ladder work.If Black answers at 2, then White will start the ladder with 3. After White 9and Black 10, White 11 is another helping move to make the ladder succeed. If Black chooses to save the stones in the ladder instead of answering with 2 or 12, White will satisfy himself with destroying the left corner that has been Black' s territory.

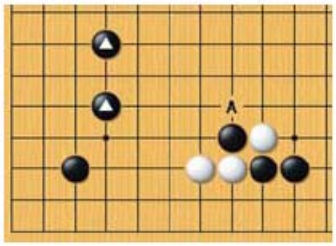


Diagram 8

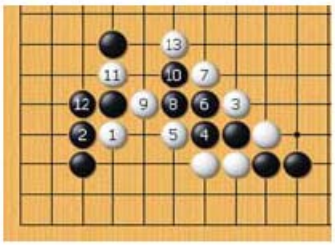


Diagram 9

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Lesson 80 : Ladders and Nets Part (2)

As you've seen in the previous lesson, there are various methods of using ladders and ladder breaks. However, there is more variety in how you can use nets.

A net is a capturing technique that blocks all the avenues of escape for the opponent's stones without touching them.

But it is not always possible to block all the ways out at all times. In many situations, the shapes of nets are far more complicated than the one in Dia.1.

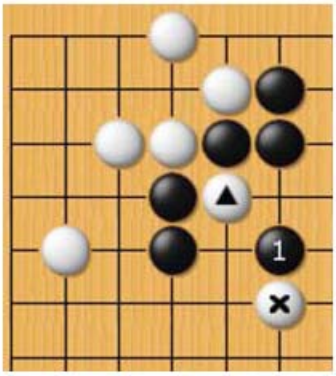

Diagram 1

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 Black 1 is the simplest type of net. A net is very useful when you cannot capture your opponent with a ladder; like in the saying, 'nets are better than ladders.'

In this example, Black cannot capture the ▲-marked white stone with a ladder because of the x-marked ladder break.

However, in more complicated cases, these two capturing techniques, the ladder and the net, should be used together.

Diagram 2 It is impossible for Black to capture the three ▲-marked white stones with a ladder. After Black A and White B, Black cannot play at C because the four x-marked stones get to be in atari. Then what about the net with D?

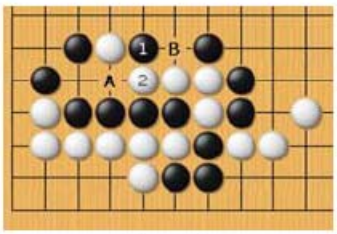

Diagram3

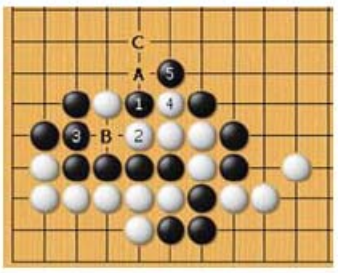

Diagram 4

Diagram 3 The problem is that Black cannot play either A or B after White comes out with 2. It is obvious why Black cannot play at A. Also, playing B makes White connect at A, giving atari to the four black stones, and then going out.

Diagram 4 In this case, you'd better combine the net with a ladder. As Black connects at 3, White can come out with 4, giving atari to Black 1. However, now Black will not save the stone. As you learned in the previous lesson, Black will keep playing the ladder with 5 regardless of the atari. If White captures the stone, Black will play atari with B, forcing White to connect at 1, and then keep playing the ladder with C.

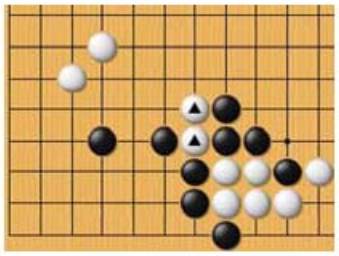

Diagram 5

Diagram 6

Diagram 5 This is a very similar example with the one shown above. The two ▲-marked white stones will not be captured by a simple ladder because the two white stones on the left side function as ladder breaks.

Diagram 6 However, to capture them with a net is not easy. When Black throws a net with 3, White gives atari to the △-marked black stone with 4.Then, what Black should do?

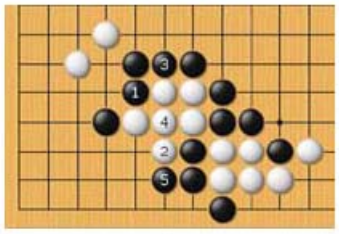

Diagram 7

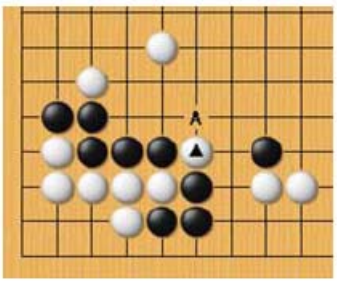

Diagram 8

Diagram 7 Once again, Black should ignore the atari and start a ladder. After giving ataris with 1 and 3, it is a normal ladder from Black 5.

Diagram 8 In some occasions, it is just technically impossible to tell a net from a ladder. You can easily figure out that A is not a move to capture the ¡a-marked white stone.

Diagram 9 Black 1 is the only way to capture that white stone. As you see, however, this Black 1 is a technique that mixes the net and the ladder, blocking the way out as well as driving stones to the dead-end.

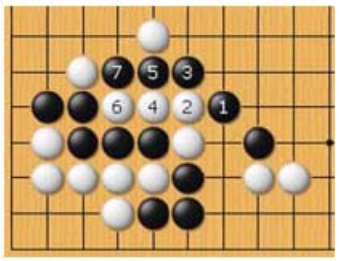

Diagram 9

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Lesson 81 : Ladders and Nets (3)

We' ve seen many examples of complicated ladders and nets, and the combination of the two in the previous lessons. Even though the concepts of ladder and net are very simple, it is not easy to use them correctly in your games. Let' s study more difficult examples in our final lesson on the subject.

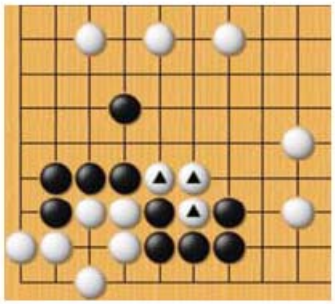

Diagram 1

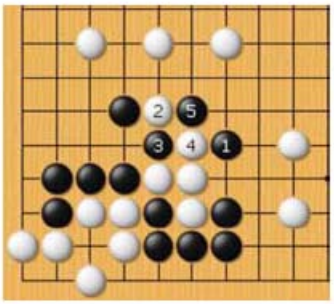

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 The three ▲-marked white stones are playing a very important role, separating Black into two hopeless groups. Black must capture these white stones to save his groups, but it is not so easy.

Diagram 2 The key is to combine the two capturing techniques, net and ladder. Black 1 is a net which is imperfect when alone. It seems that White succeeds in escaping from Black' s net when he gives atari to Black 3 with 4. However, as you already know, Black can play counter-atari with 5, ignoring White' s atari at 4.

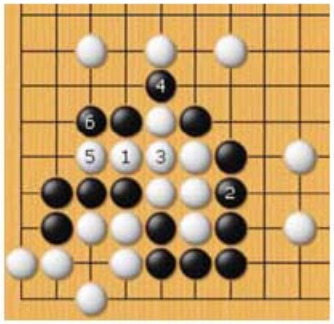

Diagram 3

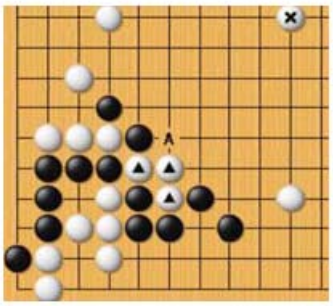

Diagram 4

Diagram 3 It is inevitable for White to capture the black stone in atari to save his own group. However, that is just the beginning of a bigger disaster. After Black' s atari at 2, the sequence up to 6 is a familiar ladder.

Diagram 4 This problem is a little bit more difficult than the earlier one. Black wants to capture the three ▲-marked white stones cutting his groups, but the ladder starting with A doesn' t work because of the x-marked white stone functioning as a ladder break.

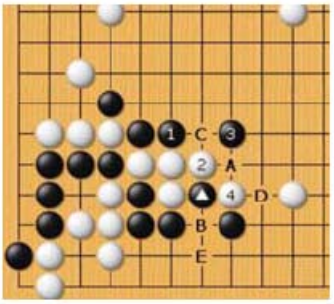

Diagram 5

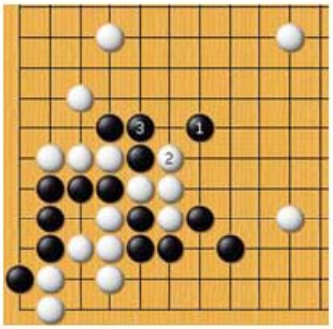

Diagram 6

Diagram 5 Furthermore, trying to make a net by playing Black 3 is useless in this situation. Although the shape looks similar to the one in Diag. 2, now White' s atari at 4 can save the group. If Black plays A, White will capture the △- marked black stone with B and connect there against Black' s atari at C. Then, Black cannot capture the white group, either with D or E.

Diagram 6 Therefore, in this case, Black should make a bigger net with 1. If White plays atari with 2, the situation will become a normal net by Black' s simple connection at 3.

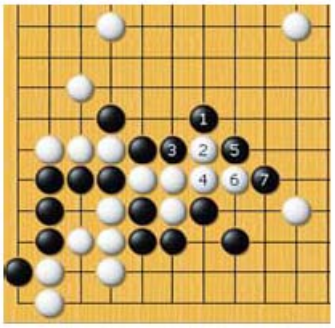

Diagram 7

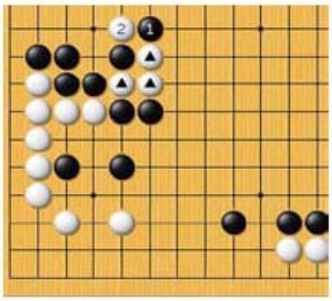

Diagram 8

Diagram 7 If White tries to escape with 2, then Black 3 will be a good move. As you see, Black captures the white group using a ladder with 5 and 7.

Diagram 8 This example is taken from a real game between professional players. When Black bends at 1, White makes a really big mistake, which doesn't become the professional title. White 2, the simple atari, is the mistake. Can you figure out why?

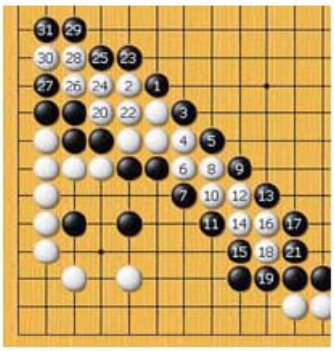

Diagram 9

Diagram 9 The sequence shown here may look very complicated, but it is a simple mixture of two large ladders. Of course, this is one possible outcome, but players will hopefully not let it come to such an abysmal point in a real game. Because this sequence was expected, however, White can't help but give up the three ▲-marked white stones, which is quite disastrous enough for him.

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Lesson 82 : Proverbs Part (1)

There are a lot of baduk proverbs, and you may have already heard some of them. Some proverbs are very serious, while others are more light-hearted, more playful, more humorous. Let's put the serious ones off to another lesson and start with the funny and easy ones.

Eat Well, Sleep Well and Gain Two Stones

How nice it would be if I could become two stones stronger! Every day I eat well and sleep well, but every morning I find that I'm at the same level. In fact, I often find myself stronger after I drink much or didn't get much sleep the night before. Especially when playing a serious game that I must win, the alcohol and lack of sleep distract me from becoming too nervous about the results of a game. Please don't try this if you're under age 20!

After the 10th Punch Will You See the Fist, and After the 20th You Will Block It

This proverb sounds very Asian. The story about a hermitmentor who taught his pupil nothing but only treated him badly is widespread in Asian countries. The philosophy of the mentor's pedagogy is that a student learns from experience, not from knowledge delivered by words. Perhaps because of this culture, people in Asian countries, including well-educated adults, start playing a game without knowing exactly what to do.

I don't know whether this kind of attitude about learning is effective in other parts of the world, but I'm sure that in baduk, it is good to be beaten several times before you go further. There is huge amount of baduk knowledge that you may not get to ask questions about if you don't play the game yourself.

Big Dragons Never Die

In baduk, a dragon is a group of several stones. (A line of stones linked solidly is sometimes called a worm.) Anyway, a big dragon usually has many more opportunities to survive on the board than a small group. It has more eye shapes, more space to make territory, more power to counterattack the opponent's stones. However, as is often the case in myth, if a young knight has fallen in love with a princess caught by a dragon, the size of the dragon makes no difference.

When in Doubt, Play Elsewhere

This is one of my favorite baduk proverbs. According to it, you don't need to be stressed out by the weight of learning joseki variations and new opening patterns. When you don't know how to reply your opponent's move, the only thing you should do is to play elsewhere. This may seem to be a joke, but many times it is not. Baduk is a game of balance. If your opponent has a chance to play a good move in one area, there will almost always be an equally good move for you in another area on another part of the board.

A Rich Man Should Not Pick Quarrels

It would seem very natural that when you have enough territory to win, you would not want any trouble that would jeopardize the current favorable situation. But, in reality, I have seen many players who respond to the opponent's every irritation because they just don't want to lose any.

The goal of baduk, however, is not to win individual fights but to win the game itself. The tricky point of this proverb is that you cannot avoid all trouble. Even if you are far ahead from a territorial point of view, your opponent can overtake you if you make a series of passive moves.

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Lesson 83 : Proverbs Part (2)

Learning Joseki Makes You Lose Two Stones in Strength

It doesn't seem fair that you lose strength by learning joseki when you can gain strength by eating and sleeping well. The real meaning of the proverb is that you should not just memorize and replay a joseki sequence.

You must also understand the particular situation for which the sequence is suitable. Otherwise, it would be better to follow another saying: "Learn joseki, but then forget it."

Don't Go Fishing While Your House Is on Fire

I believe that you wouldn't go fishing if you knew that your house was on fire.

On the other hand, in baduk, it is not always apparent whether your house is on fire. This proverb has almost the same meaning as "urgent points before big points."

The real problem is how to learn which points are urgent and which are big. And besides, what if the fish is much bigger than the house?

If You Have Lost All Four Corners, Resign

One of the old theories of baduk is that you cannot win if you don't secure a corner. You can make territory in the corners much more efficiently than on the sides and in the center, so if you lose the chance to make territory in every corner, it may not be easy to win.

However, after many brilliant professionals in Korea discovered the value of the sides and the center, the modern version of this proverb goes like this: "If you have secured the four corners, resign."

This proverb means that although the corners are efficient for building territory, the size of the territory cannot be big enough to win.

Sente Gains Nothing

This proverb is correct from a mathematical standpoint.

If a move is sente only for you, playing it is like cashing a check that is already in your hand. It makes no difference to the total sum because when you estimate the score, in most cases you assume that the sente moves are already made and answered.

However, you should make sure that the check will not bounce.

Even a Moron Connects Against a Peep

There is a very similar proverb that goes, "Even a moron connects against atari."

Usually, this is true. The time you spend seeking other moves instead of connecting against a peep or an atari is wasted. However, because you already know that you shouldn't answer blindly to every one of your opponent's ataris, it cannot be good to connect against a peep without thinking.

In many cases, you can find a better move than just solidly connecting, such as a counter-peep or a bamboo joint.

Don't Follow Proverbs Blindly

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Maybe I should have said this first instead of wasting time explaining each proverb. Baduk proverbs are not rigid laws that you have to adhere by.

However, proverbs help you understand what is standard and what is a variation, just as joseki helps you to leave standard moves and their variations. Therefore, I might say, "Learn proverbs, but then forget them."

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Lesson 84 : Unexpected Moves Part (1)

It is a very embarrassing experience when your opponent answers with an unexpected move, especially, in the middle of joseki sequence. This is one of, if not the most dominant reason why beginners don't like to study joseki. If you fail to answer correctly, the situation would turn more dismal than when you don't play a joseki.

Diagram 1

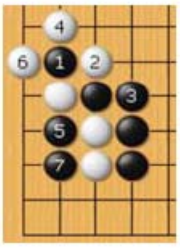

Diagram 2

Diagram 3

Diagram 1 However, it is not always possible to avoid playing a joseki. A certain amount of loss is inevitable if you avoid playing a joseki. The situation in this diagram is one example.

When White comes into the corner with 1, Black cannot only let him live inside but should get some profit as a trade. So, Black bends at 6 instead of extending at A in order to press White harder. The problem is that now White can bend at 7 and cut at 9.

Diagram 2 The White's answer Black expected against Black 6 in Dia.1 is the atari at 2. In the sequence up to 7, Black can secure the corner through the sacrifice of Black 1.

Diagram 3 The sequence here can be another option that Black can choose.

Instead of securing territory in the corner, Black can build a large influence toward the lower side. In addition to that, White's shape on the left is not perfect yet because of the ko at 1-2.

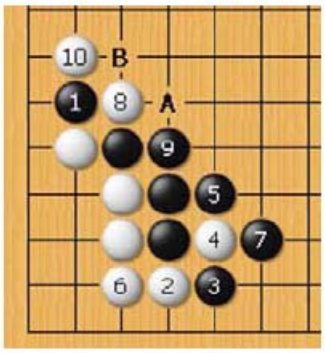

Diagram 4

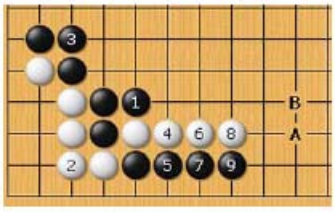

Diagram 5

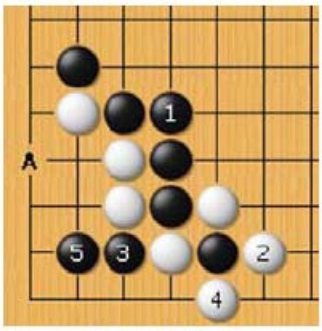

Diagram 6

Diagram 4 The cutting move of White 4 is a little bit tricky. If Black plays atari with 5, he will be in a trap. White connects at 6 instead of saving White 4 by extending and Black cannot help but to capturing it with 7. Then, the Black 1 on the left side is captured by White 8 and 9.

This resulting situation may look somewhat similar to the one in Dia. 3. However, the size of the influence is pretty smaller than the former. Now, if Black plays atari at A, White will answer with B rather than to take Black 1 off as in Dia.3 and let Black play another atari at B.

Diagram 5 If Black connects at 3 instead of taking off the white stone on the lower side as in Dia.4, White will come out with 4 to 8. If there is a black stone already played at A, this would be a very good option for Black. Otherwise, there is no way Black can save those stones on the 2nd line. Note that a black stone at B cannot be any help for the situation.

Diagram 6 For Black, connecting at 1 is a good move. Now Black gives up the lower side to White and secures the corner instead. If White tries to save the corner by connecting at 3 then Black will get the lower side by extending at 2. This is not a good choice for White since he needs another move at A to ensure that he will live in the corner and loses sente.

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Lesson 85 : Unexpected Moves Part (2)

In most cases where the opponent plays moves that you don't expect, you can break through the situation if you are flexible about your original intention.

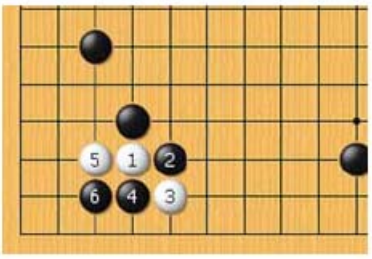

Diagram 1

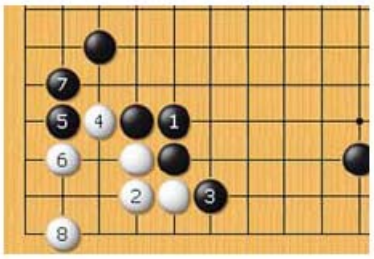

Diagram 2

Diagram 1 Here, White wants to live inside the corner occupied by Black.

White 1 and 3 are moves frequently used in this situation. However, because Black 4 and 6 cut White into two parts, it seems quite difficult for White to save both parts at the same time.

Diagram 2 At first, White expected Black to connect at 1 instead of Black 4 in Diag.1. Then, White connects at 2 forcing Black to block at 3 and lives in the sequence up to 8. Although the owner of the corner is changed so that White achieved his original goal, Black is also fine having a much stronger influence toward the center in sente.

Diagram 3 Even after Black 4 and 6 in Diag.1, White can save the two stones in the corner by sacrificing the white stone separated on the lower side as shown here. The problem with this sequence is that Black's influence gets a lot more power than in Diag.2, by capturing the white stone on the lower side.

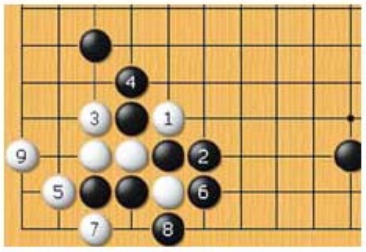

Diagram 3

Diagram 4 Therefore, in this case, it is better to abandon the first goal of living inside the corner and move to a new project. White 1 to 5 here is a sequence making Black answer at 6 and letting White surround Black. By sacrificing the three white stones in the corner, White builds up a wall on the lower side where Black arrayed his stones.

Diagram 5 After achieving the goal to build up a wall, the three white stones on the side also become disposable.

Because capturing of the three white stones makes the △-marked black stone to be vulnerable, Black cannot easily attempt this venture.

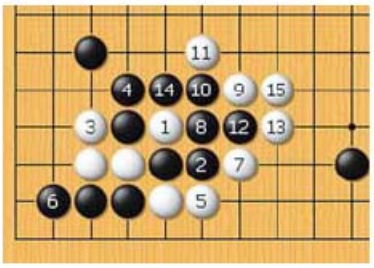

Diagram 4

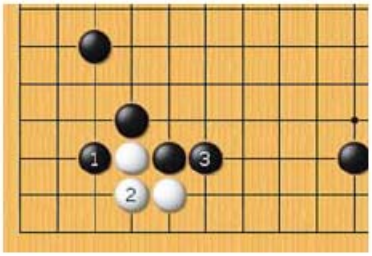

Diagram 6

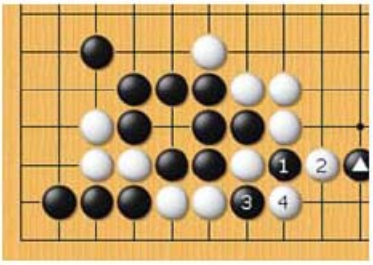

Diagram 5

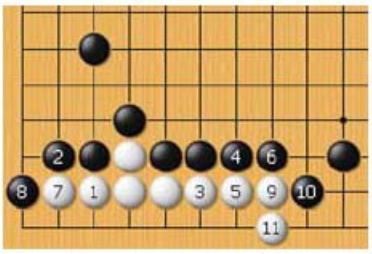

Diagram 7

Diagram 6 If Black plays aAtari from above at 1 instead of cutting with 4 as in Diag.1, White has to live on the side, not in the corner as he first intended.

Diagram 7 It is not difficult for White to live on the side if he just seeks to live. By simply pushing from 1 to 9, White succeeds in making two eyes. However, living like this allows Black to build up a great wall outside, which is unsatisfactory for White.

Diagram 8 Therefore, White again changes his original intent of saving the three stones on the lower side. White 1, attaching at the side of the black stone at the 3-3 point, is a move that gives Black more options. If Black wants to capture the three white stones on the side, he will play 2. Then, White cuts at 3 and the following sequence up to 11 ensues naturally.

White builds a decent territorial framework on the left side by giving up the lower side.

Diagram 9 Actually, the resulting situation in Diag.8 is somewhat disappointing for Black, since he loses the influence on the left side. So, in most cases, Black prefers building up a wall outside up to 6 in sente, at the cost of letting White live inside. However, this result is much better for White than the one in Diag.7, for both the territory in the corner and the strength of Black' s influence.

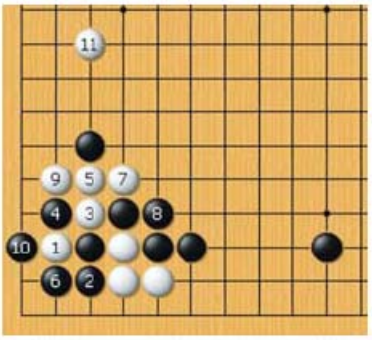

Diagram 8

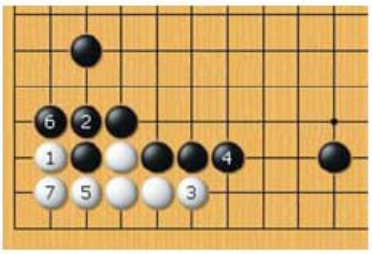

Diagram 9

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Lesson 86: Computer baduk

By Nam Chi-hyung

After the world championship-level performances of computer programs for chess, checkers, backgammon, othello and many other board games, all eyes have turned to baduk as the last frontier of computer game research. However, the performance of computer baduk programs fails to be competitive against even moderate human players, and the current level of baduk programs is only about 5-15 kyu.

Computer baduk started in the early 1970s when the first baduk-playing program was written by Zobrist. It later flourished in the 1980s when computer baduk tournaments began and the first commercial programs were released. There are several annual computer baduk tournaments, including the FOST (Foundation for the Fusion of Science and Technology) Cup, which awards approximately $20,000 to the winner.

The traditional A.I. (artificial intelligence) approach to game programming is a brute-force search, in which the game-tree is searched as deeply as possible. The game positions are evaluated using a static evaluation function, and as much of the game-tree is pruned as much as possible based on those evaluations. This brute-force approach can be characterized as ``knowledge-poor,' ' because the emphasis is on evaluating as many nodes and applying as little knowledge as possible.

The A.I. techniques used in computer programs playing other games, however, are generally unsuccessful in computer baduk. Compared to the research on chess, where the computer started playing a reasonable game in around 1980 and is now playing at human World Championship level after some twenty or twenty-five years of persistent effort thereafter, the research on baduk is still at a very low level.

Roughly speaking, the huge amount of branching in baduk is the main reason why the brute-force search technique, which enjoyed great success in computer chess, does not work in computer baduk. There are 361 points on a 19x19 baduk board while there are only 64 squares on a chessboard. The size of the number of possible positions in baduk is approximately 10^{172} compared to approximately 10^{50} for chess, and the size of game-tree _ i.e. the number of possible games _ is estimated to be 10^{575} while it is 10^{123} for chess. Computer programmers have been working very hard to find out adequate evaluation functions that would enable this huge game-tree to be pruned, but have not succeeded yet.

The key task in a baduk program is to select the next move. A small number of candidate moves are generated and then evaluated. From the perspective of move generation, the major issues involve the evaluation of the given positions rather than a full-board search.

The amount of territory a move can make is usually considered to be the most important barometer of move evaluation, although territory is not always the best indicator of the merit of a position. Also, life and death of groups, connectivity of stones, and strengths of groups are considered to be important factors for evaluation.

The problem is that in baduk, these factors cannot be statically evaluated. For example, an accurate estimation of territory requires accurate information regarding the life and death of a group. But, if there is a ko which decides the life and death of a group, the number and the size of ko threats affect the determination of territory. And, in order to overcome this kind of problem, a more strategic approach is necessary rather than the brute-force search approach.

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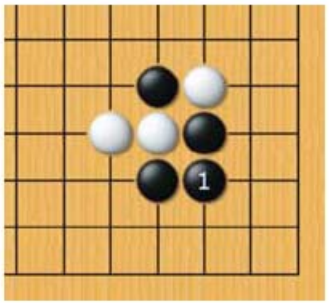
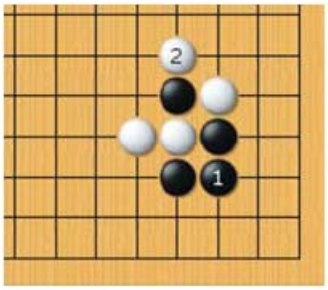
Lesson 87 : Reading Part (1)

How you choose your next move differs according to each individual player, but except in cases where you choose based on knowledge, there are two ways to select a move, namely intuition and reading. As you may infer from the name, it is tricky to explain how intuition functions in deciding a move. I hope I can explain it one day, but the topic of this lesson is reading.



Diag.1



Diag.2

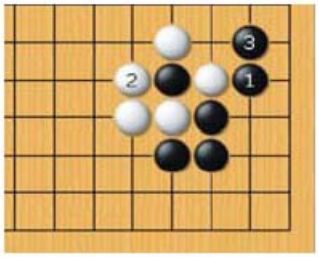
The practice of reading is not as simple to describe as you may think. Assume that you are White in Diag.1 and have to do something in this corner when Black connects at 1. This would be a relatively simple situation for White to decide the next move. Nevertheless, if you try to put the process happening in your mind into words, and to explain the reason why you pick one of the several candidate moves, you will feel quite a difficulty.

First, you should understand what position you are in. In Diag.1, White's stones are separated into two pieces, and they are quite weak.

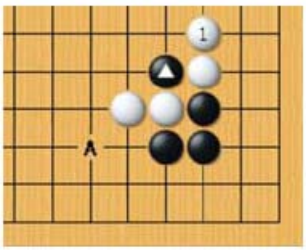
Second, you should aim to strengthen your weak stones. There can be many possible ways to reinforce your stones, but it would be the best if you can save all of them at the same time. Since the black stone in the center is the weaker out of the two black groups cutting White, you decide to attack it for your own stones' safety.

Now, you have to figure out what you can do in a given situation. If there is no ladder break of Black, one possible way for White is to capture the black stone with a ladder as shown in Diag.2.

Because Black cannot save the stone right away, you can expect Black 1 and 3 in Diag.3, making territory along the side by giving up the stone, as one of Black's possible choices. It is not at all easy to anticipate the opponent's response, which is another difficulty in reading. However, even if you can be sure of Black's playing 1 and 3, there are more things to be considered.



Diag.3



Diag.4

Since a ladder gives the opponent a chance to use a ladder break, perhaps the ladder with White 2 in Diag.2 is not the best option. White also has to consider the possibility of extending at 1 in Diag.4. In this case, it becomes much harder to guess how Black would answer. Black can either save the ¡a-marked stone or make territory along the lower side by jumping ahead at A.

As you finish calculating your candidate moves and the opponent's possible answers, the last thing you do is to compare them and choose the best sequence fitting your larger goal. This is a big deal and more often than not, it isn't obvious on what basis you should make your decision.

I tried my best to make an explanation of reading as concisely as possible, but it is tedious and boring enough. What is worse is that this long explanation does not fully show the exact process of reading.

Although most Baduk experts distinguish reading from intuition, as do I, there are also intuitive aspects included in the process of reading, which makes it hard to explain in words.

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Lesson 88 : Reading Part (2)

As shown in the previous lesson, reading is quite a complicated process. You need to judge the situation you are in, and decide on the ultimate goal you aim to accomplish in that situation.

You also have to select among the possible candidate moves to realize your goal, and calculate all the possible sequences that could occur from playing these moves. After calculating and deducing from several different positions, you have to choose one of them that best fits the given situation.

However, this is pure theory. If you follow the steps described above, you' ll be stumped from the very first step. On what basis can we judge the situation we are in? By counting territory and evaluating thicknesses? How can you know what size the territory in a certain framework will be, and how many points a certain thickness will get you, without reading the sequences and visualizing how they will play out in a certain situation?

Suppose you can judge the situation based solely upon present conditions.

How can you select among the multiple candidate moves? Indeed, there are moves that come to mind first. But, where do they come from? How do you know that these moves are the most feasible choices out of more than 100 other possible moves in the same situation?

It is another problem to calculate the possible sequences started by a candidate move. You have to guess the opponent' s answer to your initiative move and again think up your own reply to the opponent' s move. It is a step within the reading process, but it is in actuality a reading in itself!

We know that in a real game, we don' t consider all the possible moves equally; we pick up just a few plausible moves and disregard the others. We know that this is the key item that human players do better than computer players. Owing to this mysterious quality, we don' t need to worry about over-heating our brains by processing a huge number of virtual sequences. But, how are we able to do this?

You may think that this is an area having something to do with intuition rather than reading. I think such an opinion is true to a degree, but I hope intuition doesn' t play quite such a large portion in our playing. If so, it would be really hard even to become a moderately accomplished Baduk player.

One possible explanation for our ability to recognize moves worth being considered in a certain situation is that we get it from experience and practice.

Of course, there are innumerable situations possible in Baduk games, and it is unlikely that we experience all those situations and memorize the correct moves to use in the exact same situations. However, there are indeed patterns and prototypes which we can use in many situations slightly different from what we learned before.

Certainly, to play games is not the only one way for us to learn these patterns and prototypes. We learn them by studying joseki and tesuji, reviewing professionals' game records, etc.

But, in fact, the majority of the patterns and prototypes is learned through lifeand- death problems. It is likely for you to think that life-and-death problems help only the ability of visualizing virtual moves on the board and remembering the variations.

On the contrary, the main purpose of solving life-and-death problem is, more often than not, to get used to the situations happening on the board. This is why some life-

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and-death problem books sort the problems by similarity, and also why I' m going to explain them by categorizing them from the next lesson.

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Lesson 89 : Life and Death Problems (Part 1)

In Baduk, problems intended as reading exercises are called "Life-and-Death Problems," because they are usually questions about killing or saving stones. Solving lifeand- death problems is known to be very helpful in improving your reading skills, since you can concentrate on reading the possible sequences of killing or saving stones without worrying too much about their overall position on the board. This estimation often gives a distorted idea about life-and-death problems, namely that they are similar to machines we use at the fitness center for strengthening specific muscles, rather than the entire body.

On the contrary, the raison d 'etre for lifeand- death problems is much more complicated. It is true that they help us to visualize and calculate sequences more easily and correctly. However, they also allow us a better judgment of the situation we' re in, and enable us to make a more plausible and successful aim. Almost all the life-anddeath problems are designed to present numerous situations we cannot easily experience by just playing games, and let us learn shapes and tactics. Let' s see some of them categorized by useful concepts.

Make a Dual Life

You know that a group of stones needs two separate eyes to live, and you also know that a certain size or shape of territory guarantees a life of a group even without two separate eyes. However, people often forget that stones also can live with dual life.

Diagram 1 The goal of this problem is to save the black group. It is impossible to make two eyes by playing at A because of the cutting point at B. Then, what can Black do?

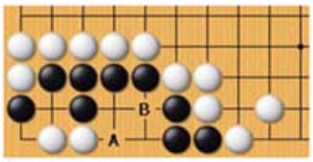

Diagram 1

Diagram 2 The answer is to connect at 1, threatening White by pretending to make two eyes. White has no choice but to play 2 to prohibit Black from making two eyes. Then Black turns the situation to a dual life and saves the group. If White plays any two x-marked points out of the three, the eye shape of Black will be the straight or bent five, which is an unconditionally living shape.

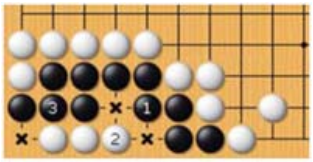

Diagram 2

Diagram 3 Same as the previous problem, it is impossible for Black to make two eyes. If Black plays at A, White will play at B and the situation will be the eye vs. no eye. If Black plays at B, White will play at A and Black will have only one eye.

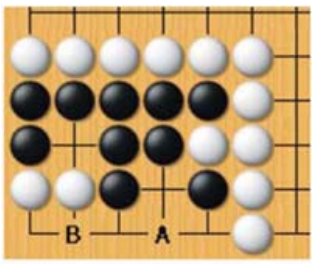

Diagram 3

Diagram 4 The goal of Black is again to make a dual life. Up to Black 5, the white stones inside make the flower five shape, but if White adds one more stone the shape will turn out to be the six, which is a living shape. Black 3 is the key point here. If Black connects at 5 without exchanging 3 and 4, White will kill him by playing at 3 and change the situation to the eye vs. no eye.

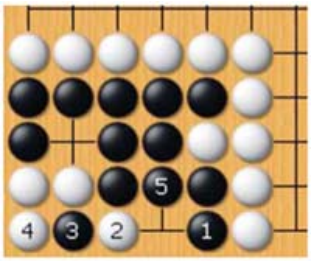

Diagram. 4

As you may have already noticed, the main point of making a dual life, as in the situations introduced above, is to make a shape where the opponent' s adding a move helps you to have a living shape. The following shapes are examples of such dual life positions.

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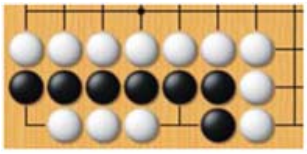

Diagram 5-1

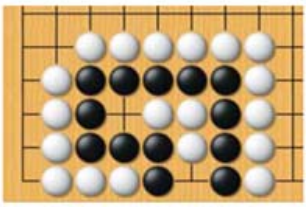

Diagram 5-2

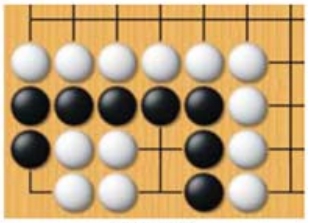

Diagram 5-3

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Lesson 90 : Life-and-Death Problems (Part 2)

There are a lot of books on life-anddeath problems, and they vary in their difficulty and the concepts they deal with. To make the maximum use of lifeand- death problems, it is important to find the right one for your level. Most such books are indicated with the level of play.

As for solving the problems, the best way is not to consult the answers. Even if you're not sure of your answer and cannot restrain your curiosity, don't look at the answers and go straight on to the next problem. In real games, you have no chance to consult anybody else, and you can only depend on yourself.

Self-Atari

Self-atari is a move, which causes the player to put himself in atari. For example, A in Diagram.1 is a self-atari for Black, since the three △-marked black stones will be in atari if Black plays there. The following problems will be solved by making the opponent put himself in self-atari.

Diagram 2 This problem is related to what we've learned in the last lesson. It's Black's turn to kill the white group. You have to make an eye shape, which cannot live.

Diagram 3 This is the final position in which Black succeeds in killing White. Some of you may think this looks like a dual life situation, but it is only White who cannot play both A and B, while Black can turn the eye shape into flower five by playing at B. (Of course Black doesn't need to do that until the game is over since the white group is dead as it is now.) This problem is included here because it is self-atari for White to play at A or B in order to change the position to bent four.

Diagram 4 This problem shows the self-atari concept even better. It's Black's turn to kill the white group again.

Diagram 5 The key move is Black 1. If White connects at 2, Black 3 is another good move. Now, White cannot block at A to capture Black 1 and 3, because then White will give himself an atari and get captured with Black B.

Diagram 6 Even if White captures Black 1 with 2 instead of connecting as shown in Dia. 5, the result is the same. This time, Black comes in with 3 forcing White to answer with 4, and then gives atari with 5. It is impossible for White to connect at 1 to save the two white stones since it leads him to a self-atari.

Diagram 7 However, the tables can be turned if Black changes the sequence of moves a little bit. If Black comes in first with 1 and then gives atari with 3 as shown here, then the one who is in the self-atari situation is Black. Even though Black plays at 4 instead of 3, White will connect at 3 and the situation is also the same. In any case, Black cannot play at A because of self-atari.

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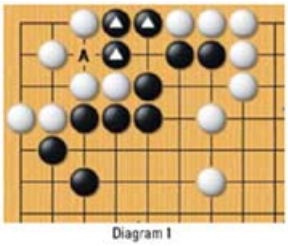

Diagram 1

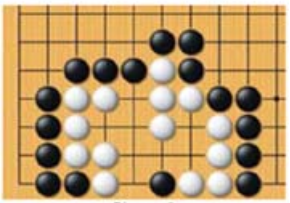
Diagram 2

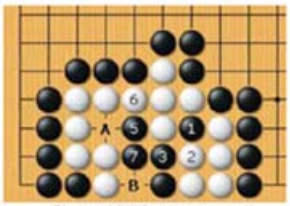

Diagram 3 (White 4 connects at 1)

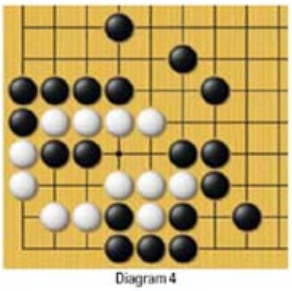
Diagram 4

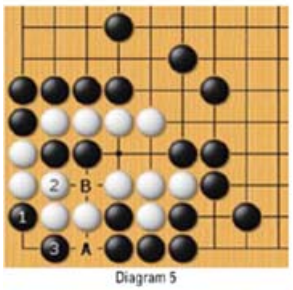

Diagram 5

Diagram 6

Diagram 7

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Lesson 91 : Life-and-Death Problems (Part 3)

The technique to put your opponent in a self-atari situation, which you learned in the last lesson, is very useful in solving life-and-death problems.

The technique to put your opponent in a self-atari situation, which you learned in the last lesson, is very useful in solving life-and-death problems. The technique you're going to learn here is quite similar to the self-atari. Do you remember that there is a point in the game where your stones no longer have any liberties? This point is called the ``illegal move'' or ``illegal point'' and you will lose the game if you play in such a way. Illegal moves are one of the first things you learn, and are something to avoid at all costs. However, illegal moves can also be used as a method to save your group of stones.

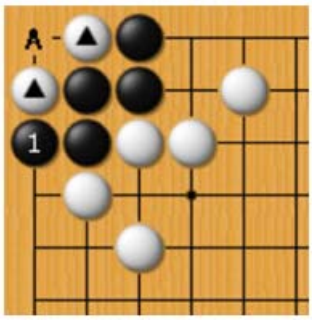

Diagram 1

Prevent Your Opponent from Playing

Diagram 1 This is an example in which Black succeeds in living by making the opponent unable to play the crucial point, namely A. Playing A is not allowed to White, while Black can make two separate eyes by playing there when White blocks his outside liberties and gives atari. Let's apply this to real life-and-death situations.

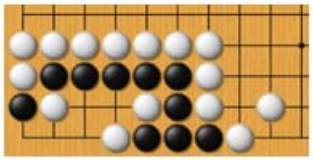
Diagram 2

Diagram 2 It is Black's turn to save his group. His goal is to put White in a position where he cannot play a certain move because it is illegal. Before looking at the following diagrams, please try to figure out the answer yourself.

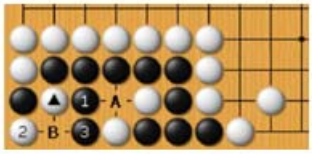

Diagram 3

Diagram 3 Black 1 directly giving atari to the ▲-marked white stone is the correct starting point. This should be followed by Black 3, which finishes the situation. White cannot play A while Black can make two separate eyes by playing it anytime he needs. If White descends at B instead of capturing the black stone in the corner with 2, Black's playing 3 would be a self-atari. In that case, to capture the one white stone on the 2nd line by playing A is a good move. You can check that White cannot connect with his stone on the 1st line since it results in a self-atari.

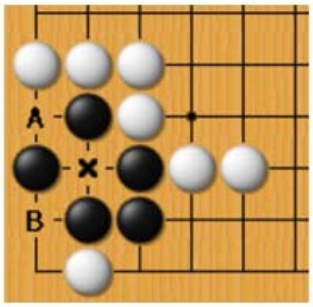

Diagram 4

Diagram 4 Now, it would be much easier for you to guess the answer since very similar positions repeat several times. Just note that Black cannot make the x-marked point his eye by playing A, because White will start a ko by playing B. To make a ko is not the answer to this problem.

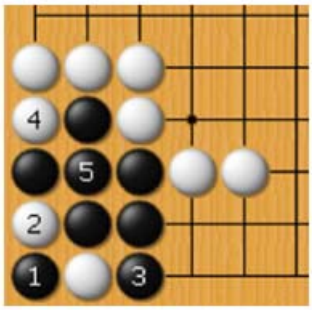

Diagram 5

Diagram 5 To sacrifice a stone with 1 is a very important step of the problem. With this, Black can make two separate eyes. After White captures it with 2, Black 3 is the final touch to reach the goal, namely make White unable to connect at 1 because it is illegal. Against White's atari with 4, Black just connects with 5. Even if White plays 4 first before capturing with 2, the situation will not change. Black will just connect at 5 and the corner situation remains the same.

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